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GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE.

HENGWRT MS.

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Cauntȩrbury.

WHan that Auerylle *with* his shoures soote [leaf 2]
The droghte of Marcħ / hath perced to the roote
And bathed euery veyne in swich lycour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour
Whan zephirus eek *with* his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in euery holt and heeth
The tendre croppes / and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram / his half cours yronne
And smale foweles / maken melodye
That slepen al the nyght with open Iye
So priketh hem nature / in hir corages
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrymages
And Palmeres for to seeken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes / kouthe in sondry londes
And specially / from euery shyres ende
Of Engelond / to Caunterbury they wende
The holy blisful martir / for to seke
That hem hath holpen whan *þat* thèy weere seeke
Bifel *þat* in that seso*u*n on a day
In Southwerk at the Tabard / as .I. lay
Redy to weenden / on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury / with ful deuout corage
At nyght was come / in to that hostelrye
Wel .xxix. in a compaignye
Of sondry folk / by auenture yfalle
In felaweshipe / and pilgrymes weere they alle
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde

The chambres and the stables / weeren wyde
And wel we weeren esed / at the beste
And shortly whan the sonne was to reste
So hadde I spoken with hem euerichoon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anoon
And maade forward / erly for to ryse [leaf 2, back]
To take oure wey / ther as .I. yow deuyse
¶ But nathelees / while .I. haue tyme and space
Er that I ferther / in this tale pace
Me thynketh it acordant to resoun
To telle yow / al the condicioun
Of eech of hem / so as it seemed me
And whiche they weere / and of what degree
And eek in what array / þat they weere Inne
And at a knyght thanne wol I first bigynne
¶ A knyght ther was / and that a worthy man Knyght
That fro the tyme / þat he first bigan
To ryden out he loued chiualrye
Trouthe and honour / fredom and curteisye
ffful worthy was he / in his lordes werre
And ther to hadde he ryden / no man ferre
As wel in cristendom / as hethenesse
And euere honured / for his worthynesse
¶ At Alisaundre he was / whan it was wonne
ffful ofte tyme / he hadde the bord bigonne
Abouen alle nacions / in Pruce
In lettow / hadde he reysed / and in Ruce
No cristen man so ofte / of his degree
In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
At Algizir / and ryden in Belmarye
At lyeys was he / and at Satalye
Whan they weere wonne / and in the grete see
At many a noble armee / hadde he bee
¶ At mortal batailles / hadde he been fiftene
And foghten for oure feyth / at Tramyssene
In lystes thryes / and ay slayn his foo

¶ This ilke worthy knyght' hadde been also
Somtyme / with the lord of Palatye
Agayn another hethen in Turkye
And eu*e*re moore / he hadde a souereyn prys
And thogh *þat* he weere worthy / he was wys
And of his poort' as meke / as is a mayde
Ne neuere yet' no vileynye he saytle
In al his lyf' vn-to no manere wight
He was a verray p*er*fit' gentil knyght'
But for to tellen yow / of his array [leaf 3]
Hise hors weere goode / but he ne was nat gay
Of ffustian / he wered a gypoñ
Al bismotered / with his haubergeon
ffor he was laate / comen from his viage
And wente / for to doon his pilgrymage
¶ With hym / ther was his sone a yong' Squyer Squyer.
A louere / and a lusty Bachiler
With lokkes crulle / as they weere leyd in *p*resse
Of .xx. yeer / he was of age I gesse
Of his stature / he was of euene lengthe
And wonderly delyuere / and of greet strengthe
And he hadde been som tyme / in chiuachye
In fflaundres / in Artoys / and Picardye
And born hym wel / as in so litel space
In hope / to stonden / in his lady grace
¶ Embrouded was he / as it weere a meede
Al ful of fresshe floures / white and reede
Syngynge he was / or floytynge al the day
He was as fressh̃ / as is the Monthe of May
Short was his gowne / with sleues / longe & wyde
Wel koude he sitte on hors / and faire ryde
He koude songes wel make / and endite
Iuste and eek daunce / and wel portreye and write
So hoote he loued / that by nyghtertale
He slepte namoore / than dooth a nyghtyngale
Curteys he was / lowely / and seruysable

And carf biforn his fader / at the table
¶ A Yeman he hadde / and seruantz namo — Yeman.
At that tyme / for hym liste ryde so
And he was clad / in coote and hood of greene
A sheef of Pecok arwes / bright' and keene
Vnder his belt' he bar ful thriftily
Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly
His arwes drowped noght' with fetheres lowe
And in his hand / he bar a myghty bowe
A not heed hadde he / with a broun visage
Of wodecraft / koude he wel al the vsage
Vp on his arm / he bar a gay bracer
And by his syde / a swerd and a Bokeler
And on that oother syde / a gay daggere — [leaf 3, back]
Harneysed wel / and sharpe / as poynt' of spere
A *Crist*ofre on his brest' of siluer sheene
An horn he bar / the bawdryk' was of greene
A fforster was he / soothly as I gesse
¶ Ther was also / a Nonne a Prioresse — Prioresse.
That of hir smylyng' was ful symple and coy
Hir gretteste ooth / was but by Seint Loy
And she was clepyd / madame Eglentyne
fful wel she soong' the seruyce dyuyne,
Entuned in hir nose / ful semely
And frenssh she spak' ful faire and fetisly
After the scole / of Stratford at the Bowe
ffor frenssh of Paryse / was to hire vnknowe
At mete / wel ytaught' was she with alle
She leet' no morsel / from hir lyppes falle
Ne wette hir fyngres / in hir sauce deepe
Wel koude she carye a morsel / and wel keepe
That no drope / fille vp on hir brist'
In curteisye / was set muchel hir list'
Hir ouer lyppe / wyped she so cleene
That in hir coppe / ther was no ferthyng' seene
Of grece / whan she dronken hadde hir draghte

ffull semely / after hir mete she raghte
And sikerly / she was of greet' desport'
And ful plesaunt' and amyable of port'
And peyned hire / to countrefete chiere
Of Court' and been estatlich of manere
And to been holden / digne of reuerence
But for to speken / of hir conscience
She was so charitable / and so pitous
She wolde wepe / if þat she sawe a Mous
Caught in a trappe / if it weere deed / or bledde
Of smale houndes / hadde she / þat she fedde
With rosted flessh̄ / or mylk / and wastel breed
But soore wepte she / if oon of hem weere deed
Or if men smoot' it / with a yerde smerte
And al was conscience / and tendre herte
ffull semely / hir wympel pynched was
Hir nose tretez / hir eyen / greye as glas
Hir mouth ful smal / and ther to / softe and reed [leaf 4]
But sikerly / she hadde a fair forheed
It was almoost' a spanne brood I trowe
ffor hardily / she was nat vndergrowe
ffull fetys was hir cloke / as I was war
Of smal Coral / aboute hir arm she bar
A peyre of bedes / gauded al with greene
And ther on heeng' a brooch of gold ful sheene
On which / was first writen / a crowned .A.
And after / amor vincit' omnia.

¶ Another Nonne / with hire hadde she, Nonne Chapeleyne and thre prestes.
That was hire Chapeleyne / and preestes thre.

¶ A Monk ther was / a fair for the maystrye Monk.
An outrydere / that' louede venerye
A manly man / to been an Abbot able
ffull many a deyntee hors / hadde he in stable
And whanne he rood / men myghte his brydel heere
Gyngle in a whistlynge wynd / as cleere
And eek' as loude / as dooth the Chapel belle

There as this lord / is kepere of the selle
The rule of seint Maure / or of seint Beneyt'
By cause þat it was oold / and som deel streyt'
This ilke Monk / leet oolde thynges pace
And heeld / after the newe world the space
He yaf noght of that text' a pulled hen
That seith / þat hunterys been none holy men
Ne þat a Monk'. whan he is recchelees
Is likned / til a fissh̄ / þat is waterlees
This is to seyn / a Monk' out of his Cloystre
But thilke text' heeld he nat worth an Oystre
And I seyde / his opynyon was good
What sholde he studie / and make hym selven wood
Vp on a book' in Cloystre alwey to poure
Or swynke with his handes / and laboure
As Austyn bit'. how shal the world be serued
Lat Austyn heue his swynk'. to hym reserued
Ther fore / he was a prykasour aryght'
Grehoundes he hadde / as swift' as fowel in flyght'
Of prikyng' and of huntyng' for the haare
Was al his lust'. for no cost wolde he spaare
I saugh his sleues / purfiled at the hond' [leaf 4, back]
With grys / and that the fyneste of a lond'
And for to festne his hood / vnder his chyn
He hadde / of gold / wroght a ful curious pyn
A loue knotte / in the gretter ende ther was
His heed was balled / that shoon as any glas
And eek his face / as he hadde been enoynt'
He was a lord ful fat' and in good poynt'
Hise eyen steepe / and rollynge in his heed
That stemed / as a fourneys of a leed
Hise bootes souple / his hors / in greet estaat'
Now certeynly / he was a fair prelat'
He was nat paale / as is a forpyned goost'
A fat swan / loued he / best of any roost'
His palfrey / was as broun as any berye

¶ A frere ther was / a wantowne and a merye, ¶ ffrere.
A lymytour / a ful solempne man
In alle the ordres foure / is noon þat kan
So muche of daliaunce / and fair langage
He hadde maked / ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen / at his owene cost'
Vn to his ordre / he was a noble post'
fful wel biloued / and famylier was hee
With ffrankeleyns / ouer al in his contree
And eek' with worthy wommen / of the town
ffor he hadde / power of confessioun
As seyde him self / moore than a curaat'
ffor of his ordre / he was licenciaat'
fful swetely / herde he confessioun
And plesant'. was his absolucioun
He was an esy man / to yeue penaunce
Ther as he wiste / to haue a good pitaunce
ffor vn to a poure ordre / for to yeue
Is signe / that a man / is wel yshryue
ffor if he yaf' he dorste make auaunt'
He wiste / þat a man was repentaunt'
ffor many a man / so hard is of his herte
He may nat weepe / thogh þat he soore smerte
Ther fore / in stede of wepynge / and preyeres
Men moote yeue siluer / to the poure freres
¶ His typet' was ay farsed ful of knyues [leaf 5]
And pynnes / for to yeuen faire wyues
And certeynly / he hadde a murye noote
Wel koude he synge / and pleyen on a roote
Of yeddynges / he bar outrely the prys
His nekke whit was / as the flour delys
Ther to he stroong' was / as a Champioun
He knew the tauernes wel in euery town
And euery hostiler / and Tappestere
Bet / than a lazer / or a beggestere
ffor vn to swich a worthy man / as he

Acorded nat / as by his facultee 244
To haue / with syke lazers aqueyntaunce
It is nat honeste / it may noght auaunce
ffor to deelen / with no swich poraille
But al with riche / and sellerys of vitaille 248
And ouer al / ther as profit sholde aryse
Curteys he was / and lowely of seruyse
Ther was no man / nowheer / so vertuous
He was the beste beggere / of his hous 252
And yaf a certeyn ferme / for the graunt' 252 *b*
Noon of his bretheren / cam ther in his haunt' 252 *c*
ffor thogh a wydwe / hadde noght' a sho 253
So plesant' was his In principio
Yet wolde he haue a ferthyng' er he wente
His purchaas / was wel bettre than his rente 256
And rage he koude / as it weere right a whelpe
In louedayes / koude he muchel helpe
ffor there / he was nat lyk' a Cloystrer
With a threedbare cope / as is a poure scoler 260
But he was lyk a maister / or a Pope
Of double worstede / was his semycope
And rounded as a belle / out of the presse
Somwhat he lypsed / for his wantownesse 264
To make his englyssh / sweete vp on his tonge
And in his harpyng' whan þat he hadde songe
Hise eyen twynkled / in his heed aryght'
As doon the sterres / in the frosty nyght' 268
This worthy lymytour / was cleped Huberd
¶ A Marchant was ther / with a forked berd Marchaunt.
In Motlee / and hye on hors he sat' [leaf 5, back]
Vp on his heed / a fflaundryssh Beuere hat' 272
His bootes clasped / faire and fetisly
Hise resons / he spak ful solempnely
Sownyng' alway / thencrees of his wynnyng'
He woolde / the see weere kept' for any thyng' 276
Bitwixen Myddelburgh / and Orewelle

Wel koude he / in eschaunge / sheeldes selle
This worthy man / ful wel his wit bisette
Ther wiste no wight. that he was in dette
So estaatly was he / of his gouernaunce
With his bargaynes / and with his cheuysaunce
ffor soothe / he was a worthy man with alle
But sooth to seyn / I noot how men hym calle
¶ A Clerc ther was / of Oxenford also ¶ Clerc of Oxenforde.
That vn to logyk. hadde longe ygo
As leene was his hors / as is a rake
And he was noght right fat I vndertake
But looked holwe / and ther to sobrely
fful threedbaare / was his oueresto Courtepy
ffor he hadde / geten hym yet no benefice
Ne was so worldly / for to haue office
For hym was leuere / haue at his beddes heed
Twenty bookes / clad / in blak / or reed
Of Aristotle / and his Philosophye
Than robes riche / or ffithele / or gay Sautrye
But al be / that he was a Philosophre
Yet hadde he / but litel gold in Cofre
But al that he myghte / of his frendes hente
On bookes / and on lernynge / he it spente
And bisily / gan for the soules preye
Of hem / that yaf hym / wher with to scoleye
Of studye / took he moost cure and moost heede
Noght oo word spak he / moore than was neede
And that was spoke / in forme / and reuerence
And short and quyk and ful of heigh sentence
Sownynge in moral vertu / was his speche
And gladly wolde he lerne / and gladly teche
¶ A Sergeaunt of lawe / waar / and wys ¶ Sergeaunt of Lawe.
That often / hadde been at the Parvys
Ther was also / ful ryche of excellence [leaf 6]
Discreet he was / and of greet reuerence
He seemed swich / hise wordes weeren so Wyse

Iústice he was / ful often in Assise
By patente / and by pleyn commissioun
ffor his science / and for his heigh renoun
Of fees and robes / hadde he many oon
So greet a purchasour / was nowher noon
Al was fee symple / to hym / in effect
His purchasyng myghte nat been infect
Nowher so bisy a man as he / ther nas
And yet he seemed / bisyer than he was
In termes / hadde he caas / and doomes alle
That from tyme of kyng william / weere falle
Ther to / he koude endite / and make a thyng
Ther koude no wight pynchen at his writyng
And euery statut. koude he pleyn by roote
He rood but hoomly / in a medlee coote
Girt with a ceynt of sylk. with barres smale
Of his array / telle I no lenger tale
¶ A ffrankeleyn / was in his compaignye ¶ ffrankeleyn.
Whit was his berd / as is the dayesye
Of his complexcion / he was sangwyn
Wel loued he by the morwe / a sope in wyn
To lyuen in delyt was euere his wone
ffor he was / Epicurus owene sone
That heeld opynyon / þat pleyn delit
Was verray / felicitee parfit
An housholdere / and that a greet was hee
Seint Iulyan he was / in his contree
His breed / his ale / was alweys after oon
A bettre envyned man / was neuere noon
With oute bake mete / was neuere his hous
Of fresshe fisshe / and flesshe / and that so plentevous
It snewed in his hous / of mete and drynke
Of alle deyntees / þat men koude bithynke
After / the sondry sesons / of the yeer
So chaunged he / his mete / and his soper
fful many a fat partrych / hadde he in Muwe

And many a breem / and many a luce in Stuwe
Wo was his Cook / but if his Sauce weere [leaf 6, back]
Poynaunt and sharpe / and redy al his geere
His table dormaunt in his halle alway
Stood redy couered / al the longe day
At sessions / ther was he / lord and sire
ffful ofte tyme / he was knyght of the Shire
An Anlaas / and a Gipser / al of Sylk
Heeng at his girdel / whit as morne mylk
A Shirreue hadde he been / and Countour
Was nowheer / swich a worthy vauasour
¶ An haberdasshere / and a Carpenter [Haberdasshere
A Webbe / a Dyere / and a Tapycer [Carpenter.
And they weere clothed alle / in oo lyueree [Webbe.
[Dyere.
[Tapycer.
Of a solempne / and a greet fraternytee
ffull fressh and newe / hir geere apyked was
Hir knyues weere chaped / noght with bras
But al with siluer / wroght ful clene and wel
Hir girdles / and hir pouches / euerydel
Wel seemed eech of hem / a fair Burgeys
To sitten in a yeldehalle / on a deys
Euerych / for the wisdom / þat he kan
Was shaply / for to been an Alderman
ffor catel / hadde they ynogh / and rente
And eek hir wyues / wolde it wel assente
And ellis certeyn / they weere to blame
It is ful fair / to been yclepyd madame
And goon to vigilies / al bifore
And haue a Mantel / realliche ybore
¶ A Cook they hadde with hem / for the nones [Cook.
To boille the chiknes / with the Marybones
And poudre marchaunt. tart and / Galyngale
Wel koude he knowe / a draghte of london ale
He koude rooste / and seethe / and broille / & frye
Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye
But greet harm was it as it thoughte me

That on his Shyne / a Mormal hadde he
ffor Blankmanger / that maade he with the beste
¶ A Shipman was ther / wonyng fer by weste Shipman.
ffor aught I woot' he was of Dertemouthe
He rood vp on a Rouncy / as he kouthe
In a gowne of faldyng' to the knee [leaf 7]
A daggere hangynge on a laas / hadde he
Aboute his nekke / vnder his arm adown
The hoote Somer / hadde maad his hewe al brown
And certeynly / he was a good felawe
fful many a draghte of wyn / hadde he drawe
ffro Burdeuxward' / whil þat the Chapman sleepe
Of nyce conscience / took he no keepe
If þat he faght' and hadde the hyer hond'
By watre he sente hem hoom / to euery lond'
But of his craft' to rekene wel his tydes
His stremys / and his daungers hym bisydes
His herberwe and his moone / his lodmenage
Ther was noon swich / from hulle to Cartage
Hardy he was / and wys to vndertake
With many a tempest' hadde his beerd been shake
He knew alle the hauenes / as they weere
ffro Gootlond / to the cape of ffynysteere
And euery cryke / in Britaigne / and in Spaigne
His barge / y-clepyd was the Mawdelayne
¶ With vs / ther was / a Doctour of Phisyk' Doctour of Phisyk'.
In al this world / ne was ther noon hym lyk'
To speken of Phisyk' and of Surgerye
ffor he was grounded / in Astronomye
He kepte his pacient' a ful greet deel
In houres / by his magyk natureel
Wel koude he fortunen / the ascendent'
Of hise ymages / for his pacient'
He knew the cause / of euery maladye
Weere it' of hoot' or coold / or moyste / or drye
And where it engendred / and of what humour

He was a verray / p*er*fit practisour
The cause yknowe / and of his harm the roote
Anoon he yaf / the sike man his boote
¶ fful redy hadde he / hise Apothecaryes
To senden hym / his drogges / and his letuaryes
ffor eech of hem / maade oother for to wynne
Hir frendshipe / was noght newe to bigynne
Wel knew he / the olde Esculapyus
And Discorides / and eek' Rusus
Olde ypocras / Haly / and Galyen [leaf 7, back]
Serapion / Razis / and Avycen
Auerroys / Damascien / and Constantyn
Bernard / and Gatesden / and Gilbertyn
Of his diete / mesurable was hee
ffor it was / of no sup*er*fluytee
But of greet norissynge / and digestible
His studye / was but litel on the Bible
In sangwyn and in Pers / he clad was al
Lyned with Taffata / and with Sendal
And yet he was / but esy of dispence
He kepte / þ*at* he wan in pestilence
ffor gold in Phisyk'. is a Cordial
Ther fore / he loued gold in special
¶ A good wyf was ther / of bisyde Bathe The Goode Wyf of bisyde Bathe.
But she was som del deef' and that was scathe
Of clooth makynge / she hadde swich an haunt'
She passed hem / of Ipres / and of Gaunt'
In al the parysshe / wyf ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge / bifore hire sholde goon
And if ther dide / certeyn / so wrooth was shee
That she was / out of alle charitee
Hir Coue*r*chiefes / ful fyne weere of grownd'
I dorste swere / they weyeden. ten pownd'
That on a Sonday / weeren vp on hir heed
Hir hosen weeren / of fyn Scarlet reed
fful streyte yteyd / and shoes / ful moyste & newe

Boold was hir face / and fair and reed of hewe
She was a worthy wo*m*man / al hir lyue
Housbondes at chirche dore / she hadde fyue
With outen oother compaignye / in yowthe
But ther of / nedeth noght' to speke as nowthe
And thries / hadde she been at Ierusalem
She hadde passed / many a straunge strem
At Rome she hadde been / and at Boloyne
In Galyce at Seint Iame / and at Coloyne
She koude muchel / of wandrynge by the weye
Gattothed was she / soothly for to seye
Vp on an Amblere / esily she sat'
Ywympled wel / and on hir heed an hat'
As brood as is / a Bokeler / or a Targe [leaf 8]
A foot mantel / aboute hir hypes large
And on hir feet' a peyre of spores sharpe
In felaweshipe / wel koude she laughe. and carpe
Of remedies of loue / she knew *par* chaunce
ffor she koude of that art' the olde daunce
¶ A good man / was ther / of Religioun
And was a poure *par*son / of a toun Parsoñ of a town.
But riche he was / of holy thoght and werk'
He was also / a lerned man a Clerk'
That Cristes gospel / trewely wolde *pr*eche
His parisshens / deuoutly wolde he teche
Benygne he was / and wonder diligent
And in aduersitee / ful pacient'
And swich he was proeued / ofte sythes
fful looth weere hym / to cursen for his tythes
But rather wolde he yeuen / out of doute
Vn to his poure parisshens aboute
Of his offrynge / and eek' of his substaunce
He koude in litel thyng' haue suffisaunce
Wyd was his parisshe / and houses fer a sonder
But he ne lafte noght' for reyn ne thonder
In siknesse / nor in meschief' to visite

The ferreste in his parisshe / muche and lyte
Vp on his feet' and in his hond a staf'
This noble ensample / to his sheep he yaf' 496
That first he wroghte / and afterward he taughte
Out of the gospel / he tho wordes caughte
And this figure / he added eek ther to
That if gold ruste / what sholde Iren do 500
ffor if a preest be foul / in whom we truste
No wonder is / a lewed man to ruste
And shame it is / if a preest take keepe
A shiten shepherde / and a clene sheepe 504
Wel oghte a preest' ensample for to yiue
By his clennesse / how þat his sheep sholde lyue
He sette nought'. his benefice to hyre.
And leet his sheep / encombred in the Myre 508
And ran to Londoñ / vn to Seint Poules
To seeken hym / a Chauntrye for soules
Or with a breetherede / to been withhoolde [leaf 8, back]
But dwelte at hoom / and kepte wel his foolde 512
So þat the wolf' ne maade it nought' myscarye
He was a sheepherde / and nought a Mercenarye
And thogh he hooly weere / and vertuous
He was nought' to synful men despitous 516
Ne of his speche / daungerous / ne digne
But in his techyng' discreet' and benygne
To drawen folk' to heuene / *with* fairnesse
By good ensample / this was his bisynesse 520
But it weere / any *per*sone obstynaat'
What so he weere / of heigh / or lowe estaat'
Hym wolde he snybben / sharply for the nonys
A bettre preest' I trowe ther nowher noon ys 524
He wayted / after no pompe / and reuerence
Ne maked hym / a spyced conscience
But Cristes loore / and hise Apostles twelue
He taughte / but first' he folwed it hym selue 528
¶ With hym ther was a Plowman / was his broother Plowman.

That hadde ylad of donge / ful many a ffoother
A trewe swynkere / and a good was he
Lyuynge in pees / and perfit charitee
God loued he best' with al his hoole herte
At alle tymes / thogh hym gamed / or smerte
And thanne his Neighebore / right as hym selue
He wolde thresshe / and ther to / dyke and delue
ffor Cristes sake / with euery poure wight'
With outen hyre / if it laye in his myght'
His tythes payde he / ful faire and wel
Bothe of his propre swynk' and his catel
In a Tabard' he rood / vp on a Mere
Ther was also / a Reue / and a Millere
A Somonour / and a Pardoner also
A Maunciple / and my self' ther weere namo
¶ The Millere / was a stout carl / for the nones Millere.
fful byg' he was / of brawen / and eek of bones
That proeued wel / for ouer al ther he cam
At wrastlynge / he wolde haue alwey the Ram
He was short shuldred / brood / a thikke knarre
Ther was no dore / that he noolde heue of harre
Or breke it at a rennynge / with his heed [leaf 9]
His beerd / as any sowe / or fox / was reed
And ther to brood / as thogh it weere a spaade
Vp on the cope right of his nose he haade
A werte / and ther on stood / a tuft' of heerys
Reede / as the bristles / of a Sowes eerys
Hise nosethirles / blake weere and wyde
A swerd and a bokeler / baar he by his syde
His mouth as greet was / as a greet fourneys
He was a Ianglere / a Golyardeys
And that was moost' of synne and harlotryes
Wel koude he stelen corn / and tollen thryes
And yet he hadde / a thombe of gold pardee
A whit coote / and a blew hood wered hee
A Baggepipe / wel koude he / blowe and sowne

And ther with al / he broghte vs out of towne
¶ A gentil Maunciple / was ther / of a Temple Maunciple.
Of which / Achatours myghte take exemple
ffor to been wyse / in byynge of vitaille
ffor wheither þat he payde / or took by taille
Algate he wayted so / in his achaat
That he was ay biforn / and in good staat
¶ Now is nat that of god / a ful greet grace
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wysdom / of an heepe / of lerned men
Of Maistres hadde he mo / than thryes ten
That weeren of lawe / expert and curious
Of whiche / ther weere a dozeyne / in that hous
Worthy / to been stywardes / of rente / and lond
Of any lord / that is in Engelond
To make hym lyue / by his propre good
In honour dettelees / but if he weere wood
Or lyue as scarsly / as hym lyst desire
And able / for to helpen al a Shire
In any caas / that myghte falle or happe
And yet this Maunciple / sette hir aller cappe
¶ The Reue / was a sclendre colerik man Reue
His beerd was shaue / as neigh as euer he kan
His heer was by his eerys / ful rownd yshorn
His tope was dokked / lyk a preest byforn
fful longe weere hise legges / and ful leene [leaf 9, back]
Ylik a staf. ther was no calf yseene
Wel koude he keepe / a Gerner and a Bynne
Ther was noon Auditour / koude on hym wynne
Wel wiste he / by the droghte and by the reyn
The yeldynge / of his seed / and of his greyn
His lordes sheepe / his neet / his dayerye
His swyn / his hors / his stoor / and his pultrye
Was hoolly / in this Reues gouernynge
And by his couenant. yaf the rekenynge
Syn that his loord / was twenty yeer of age

Ther koude no man / brynge hym in arrerage
Ther nas Baillyf'. hierde / nor oother hyne
That he ne knew / his sleyghte / and his couyne
They weere adrad of hym / as of the deeth
His wonyng' was ful faire vp on an heeth
With greene trees / shadwed was his place
He koude bettre / than his lord purchace
fful riche / he was astoored pryuely
His lord / wel koude he plesen subtilly
To yeue / and leene hym / of his owene good
And haue a thank'. and yet a coote and hood
In youthe / he lerned hadde / a good Mister
He was a wel good wrighte / a Carpenter
This Reue sat' vp on a wel good Stot'
That was a Pomely gray / and highte Scot'
A long Surcote of Pers / vp on he haade
And by his syde / he baar a rusty blaade
Of Northfolk was this Reue / of which I telle
Bisyde a town / men clepyn Baldeswelle
Tukked he was / as is a ffrere aboute
And euere he rood / the hyndreste of oure route
¶ A Somonour / was ther with vs / in that place Somonor
That hadde / a fyr-reed Cherubynnes face
ffor Sawceflewm he was / with eyen narwe
And hoot he was / and lecherous as a Sparwe
With scaled browes blake / and pyled berd'
Of his visage / children weere aferd'
Ther nas quyk' siluer / lytarge / ne Brymstoon
Borace / Ceruce / ne Oille of Tartre noon
Ne oynement'. that wolde clense and byte [leaf 1(
That hym myghte helpen / of his whelkes whyte
Nor of the knobbes / sittynge on his chekes
Wel loued he garlek' oynons and eek lekes
And for to drynke strong wyn / reed as blood
Thanne wolde he spcke / and crye as he were wood
[. . . . . .

[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
A fewe termes hadde he / two / or thre
That he hadde lerned / out of som decree
No wonder is / he herde it al the day
And eek ye knowe wel / how þat a Iay
Kan clepen watte / as wel as kan the Pope
But who so koude / in oother thyng hym grope
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie
Ay Questio quid iuris wolde he crye
¶ He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
A bettre felawe / sholde men noght fynde
He wolde suffre / for a quart of wyn
A good felawe / to haue his concubyn
A twelf monthe / and excusen hym at the fulle
fful pryuely / a fynch eek koude he pulle
And if he foond owher / a good felawe
He wolde techen hym / to haue noon awe
In swich caas / of the Ercedeknes curs
But if a mannes soule / were in his purs
ffor in his purs / he sholde ypunysshed be
Purs is the Ercedeknes helle / seyde he
¶ But wel I woot he lyed right in dede
Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man [to] drede
ffor curs wol sle / right as assoillyng sauyth
And also / war hym of a significauit /
¶ In daunger hadde he / at his owene gyse
The yonge gerles / of the diocise
And knew hir conseil / and was al hir reed
A gerland / hadde he set vp on his heed
As greet. as it were / for an Ale stake
A bokeler / hadde he maad hym of a cake
¶ With hym ther rood / a gentil Pardoner — Pardoner.
Of Rouncyual / his freend / and his comper
That streight was comen / fro the Court of Rome
fful loude he soong com hyder loue to me
This Somonour baar to hym / a styf burdoun — [leaf 10, back]

Was neuere trompe / of half so greet a soun
¶ This Pardoner / hadde heer / as yelow as wex
But smothe it heeng' as dooth a stryke of flex
By ounces / henge his lokkes þat he hadde
And ther with / he his shuldres ouerspradde
But thynne it lay / by colpons oon and oon
But hood for Iolitee / wered he noon
ffor it was trussed vp / in his walet'
Hym thoughte / he rood al of the newe Iet'
Discheuele saue his cappe / he rood al bare
Swiche glarynge eyen / hadde he as an hare
A vernycle / hadde he sowed / vp on his cappe
His walet' [lay] biforn hym / in his lappe
Bretful of pardoñ / comen from Rome al hoot'
A voys he hadde / as smal / as hath a Goot'
No berd hadde he / ne neuere sholde haue
As smothe it was / as it were late yshaue
I trowe he were a geldyng' or a Mare
But of his craft'. fro Berwyk in to Ware
Ne was ther / swich another Pardoner
ffor in his Male / he hadde a pilwe beer
Which þat he seyde / was oure lady veyl
He seyde he hadde / a gobet of the seyl
That seint Peter hadde / whan þat he wente
Vp on the see / til Ihesu Crist hym hente
He hadde a cros of latoun / ful of stones
And in a glas / he hadde pigges bones
But with thise relykes / whan þat he foond
A poure parson / dwellyng vp on lond
Vp on a day / he gat hym moore moneye
Than þat the parsoun gat / in Monthes tweye
And thus / with feyned flaterye and Iapes
He made the parson / and the peple his apes
But trewely / to tellen at the laste
He was in chirche / a noble Ecclesiaste
Wel koude he / rede a lesson / and a Storie

But alderbest' he soong an Offertorie
ffor wel he wiste / whan þat soong was songe
He moste preche / and wel affyle hys tonge
To wynne siluer / as he ful wel koude [leaf 11]
Ther fore he soong' the muryerly and loude
¶ Now haue I toold yow / soothly in a clause
Thestaat / tharray / the nombre / and eek the cause
Why þat assembled was this compaignye
In Southwerk'. at this gentil hostelrye
That highte the tabard' / faste by the belle
But now is tyme / to yow for to telle
How þat we baren vs / that ilke nyght'
Whan we weere / in that hostelrye alyght'
And after wol I telle / of oure viage
And al the remenant' of oure pilgrymage
¶ But first I pray yow / of youre curteisye
That ye narette it / noght my vileynye
Though þat I pleynly speke / in this matere
To telle yow / hir wordes / and hir cheere
Ne thogh I speke / hir wordes proprely
ffor this ye knowen / also wel as I
Who so shal telle a tale / after a man
He moot reherce / as neigh as euere he kan
Euerich a word / if it be in his charge
Al speke he / neuer so rudeliche and large
Or ellis / he moot telle his tale vntrewe
Or feyne thyng' or fynde wordes newe
He may noght spare / althogh he weere his brother
He moot as wel / seye o word / as another
Crist spak hym self' ful brode in holy writ
And wel ye woot' no vileynye is it
Ek Plato seith / who so kan hym rede
The wordes / mote be cosyn / to the dede
¶ Also I pray yow / to foryeue it me
Al haue I nat set folk / in hir degree
Here in this tale / as þat they sholde stonde

My wit is short' ye may wel vnderstonde
¶ Greet cheere / made oure hoost vs euerichon
And to the souper / sette he vs anon
He serued vs / with vitaille / at the beste
Strong was the wyn / and wel to drynke vs leste
A semely man / oure hoost was with alle
ffor to been / a Marchal in an halle
A large man he was / with eyen stepe [leaf 11, back]
A fairer burgeys / was ther noon in Chepe
Boold of his speche / and wys / and well ytaught'
And of manhode / hym lakked right naught'
Eke ther to / he was right a murye man
And after souper / pleyen he bigan
And spak of murthe / amonges othere thynges
Whan þat we hadde maad oure rekenynges
And seyde thus / now lordes trewely
Ye been to me / right wel come hertely
ffor by my trouthe / if þat I shal nat lye
I seigh noght this yeer / so mury a compaignye
At ones in this herberwe / as is now
ffayn wolde I doon yow myrthe / wiste I how
And of a myrthe / I am right now bithoght'
To doon yow ese / and it shal coste noght'
¶ Ye goon to Caunterbury / god yow spede
The blisful Martir / quyte yow youre mede
And wel I woot' as ye goon by the weye
Ye shapen yow / to talen and to pleye
ffor trewely / confort / ne murthe is noon
To ryde by the weye / domb as stoon
And ther fore / wol I maken yow desport'
As I seyde erst' and doon yow som confort'
And if yow liketh alle / by oon assent'
ffor to stonden / at my Iuggement'
And for to werken / as I shal yow seye
Tomorwe / whan ye ryden by the weye
Now by my fader soule / þat is deed

But ye be murye / I wol yeue yow myn heed
Hoold vp youre hondes / with outen moore speche
¶ Oure conseil / was nat longe for to seche
Vs thoughte / it was nat worth / to make it wys
And graunted hym / with outen moore avys
And bade hym seye / his voirdit' as hym leste
¶ Lordynges quod he / now herkneth for the beste
But taketh it noght' I pray yow in desdeyn
This is the poynt' to speken short and pleyn
That ech of yow / to shorte with oure weye
In this viage / shal tellen tales tweye
To Caunterburyward' / I mene it so [leaf 12]
And homward / he shal tellen othere two
Of auentures / þat whilom haue bifalle
And which of yow / þat bereth hym best of alle
That is to seyn / that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence / and moost solas
Shal haue a Souper / at oure aller cost'
Here in this place / sittynge by this post'
Whan that we come agayn / fro Caunterbury
And for to make yow / the moore mury
I wol my self' goodly wit[h] yow ryde
Right at myn owene cost' and be youre gyde
And who so wole / my Iuggement with seye
Shal paye / al that we spende by the weye
And if ye vouche sauf / þat it be so
Tel me anoon / with outen wordes mo
And I wol erly / shape me ther fore
¶ This thyng was graunted / and oure othes swore
With ful glad herte / and preyden hym also
That he wolde vouche sauf / for to do so
And that he wolde been / oure gouernour
And of oure tales / Iuge and reportour
And sette a souper / at a certeyn prys
And we wol ruled been / at his deuys
In heigh and logh / and thus by oon assent'

We been acorded / to his Iuggement'
And ther vp on / the wyn was fet anoon
We dronken / and to reste wente echon'
With outen / any lenger taryynge
¶ A morwe / whan þat day bigan to sprynge
Vp roos oure hoost' and was oure aller cok'
And gadred vs / togydres in a flok'
And forth we ryden / a litel moore than pas
Vn to the wateryng' of Seint Thomas
And there oure hoost' bigan his hors areste
And seyde / lordes / herkneth if yow leste
¶ Ye woot youre forward / and it yow recorde
If euensong / and morwesong' acorde
Lat se now / who shal telle the firste tale
As euere mote I drynke wyn / or Ale
Who so be rebel / to my Iuggement' [leaf 12, back]
Shal paye / for al / that by the wey is spent
Now draweth cut' er þat we ferrer twynne
He which þat hath the shorteste / shal bigynne
¶ Sire knyght quod he / my mayster and my lord
Now draweth cut' for that is myn acord
Cometh neer quod he / my lady Prioresse
And ye sire Clerc'. lat be your shamefastnesse
Ne studieth noght'·ley hond to / euery man
¶ Anoon to drawen / euery wight bigan
And shortly / for to tellen / as it was
Were it by auenture / or sort' or cas
The sothe is this / the Cut fil to the knyght'
Of which ful blithe and glad was euery wight'
And telle he moste his tale / as was resoun
By forward / and by composicioun
As ye han herd / what nedeth wordes mo
And whan this goode man / sawgh þat it was
As he / þat wys was / and obedient'
To kepe his forward / by his free assent'
He seyde / syn I shal bigynne the game

What wel come be the Cut' in goddes name
Now lat vs ryde / and herkneth what I seye
And with that word / we ryden forth oure weye
And he bigan / with right a murye cheere
His tale anoon / and seyde as ye may heere

¶ Iamque domos patria Scithice post aspera gentis
prelia laurigero.

Here bigynneth the knyghtes tale.

Whilom / as olde stories tellen vs
Ther was a duc þat highte Theseus
Of Atthenes / he was lord and gouernour
And in his tyme / swich a conquerour
That gretter was ther noon vnder the sonne
fful many a riche contree / hadde he wonne
What with his wysdom / and his chiualrye
He conquered / al the regne of femenye
That whilom / was ycleped Scithia [leaf 13]
And wedded / the queene ypolita
And broghte hire hom with hym / in his contree
With muchel glorie / and greet solempnitee
And eek / hir yonge suster Emelye
And thus with victorie / and with melodye
Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde
And al his hoost / in armes hym bisyde
¶ And certes / if it nere to long to heere
I wolde haue toold / fully the manere
How / wonnen was the regne of ffemenye
By Theseus / and by his Chiualrye
And of the grete bataille / for the nones
Bitwixen Atthenes / and Amazones
And how assegeged was ypolita
The faire hardy queene of Scithia
And of the feste / þat was at hir weddynge
And of the tempest at hir hom comynge
But al that thyng / I moot as now forbere
I haue god woot / a large feeld to ere
And wayke / been the oxen in my plogh
The remenant of the tale / is long ynogh
I wol nat letten eek / noon of this route

Lat euery felawe / telle his tale aboute
And lat se now / who shal the soupper Wynne
And ther I lefte / I wol ayein bigynne [*A break in the MS. with*]
Incipit narracio (a)
This duc / of Whom I make mencion
Whanne he was come / almoost to the town
In al his wele / and in his mooste pryde
He was war / as he caste his eye asyde
Wher þat ther kneled / in the heighe weye
A compaignye of ladyes / tweye and tweye
Ech after oother / clad in clothes blake
But swich a cry and swich a wo they make
That in this world / nys creature lyuynge
That herde / swich another waymentynge
And of this cry / they nolde neuere stenten [leaf 13, back]
Til they / the reynes of his brydel henten
¶ What folk been ye / þat at myn hom comynge
Perturben so my feste / with cryynge
Quod Theseus / haue ye so greet envie
Of myn honour / that thus compleyne *and* crye
Or who hath yow mysboden / or offended
And telleth me / if it may been amended
And why þat ye / been clothed thus in blak/
The eldeste lady / of hem alle spak
Whan she hadde swowned / *with* a deedly cheere
That it was routhe / for to seen and heere
¶ She seyde / lord / to whom ffortune hath yiuen
Victorie / and as a Conquerour to lyuen
Noght greueth vs youre glorie / and youre hono*ur*
But we biseken / mercy and socour
Haue mercy on oure wo / and oure distresse
Som drope of pitee / thurgh thy gentillesse
Vp on vs wrecched wommen / lat thow falle
ffor certes lord / ther is noon of vs alle
That she ne hath been / a duchesse / or a queene
Now be we caytyues / as it is wel seene
Thanked be ffortune / and hir false wheel

That noon estaat' assureth to been weel
Now certes lord / to abiden youre presence
Heere in this temple / of the goddesse clemence
We haue been waytynge / al this fourtenyght'
Now help vs lord / syth it is in thy myght'
¶ I wrecche / which þat wepe and waille thus
Was whilom wyf / to kyng' Cappaneus
That starf at Thebes / cursed be the day
And alle we / þat been in this array
And maken / al this lamentacioun
We losten alle oure housbondes / at that town
Whil þat the sege / ther aboute lay
And yet now / the olde Creon' weylaway
That lord is now / of Thebes the Citee
ffulfild of Ire / and of Iniquitee
He for despit / and for his tyrannye
To doon / the dede bodyes vileynye
Of alle oure lordes / whiche þat been slawe [leaf 14]
Hath alle the bodyes / on an heepe ydrawe
And wol nat suffren hem / by noon assent'
Neyther to been yburyed / nor ybrent'
But maketh houndes / ete hem in despit'
And with that word / with outen moore respit'
They fillen gruf' and cryden pitously
Haue / on vs wrecched wommen / som mercy
And lat oure sorwe / synken in thyn herte
¶ This gentil duc' doun from his courser sterte
With herte pitous / whan he herde hem speke
Hym thoughte / þat his herte wolde breke
Whan he saugh hem / so pitous / and so maat'
That whilom weren / of so greet estaat'
And in hise armes / he hem alle vp hente
And hem conforteth / in ful good entente
And swoor his ooth / as he was trewe knyght'
He wolde doon / so ferforthly his myght'
Vp on the tiraunt Creon / hem to wreke

That al the peple of Grece / sholde speke
How Creon) was / of Theseus yserued
As he þat hadde his deeth / ful wel disserued
And right anoon / with outen moore abood
His baner he desplayeth / and forth rood
To Thebesward / and al his oost bisyde
No neer Atthenes / wolde he go ne ryde
Ne take his ese / fully half a day
But onward in his wey / that nyght he lay
And sente anoon / ypolita the queene
And Emelye / hir yonge suster sheene
Vn to the town of Atthenes / to dwelle
And forth he ryt' ther nys namoore to telle
¶ The rede statue of Mars / with spere and targe
So shyneth / in his white Baner large.
That alle the feeldes / glitren vp and doun
And by his Baner / born was his penoun
Of gold ful ryche / in which ther was ybete
The Mynotaur / which þat he wan in Crete
¶ Thus ryt this duc'. thus ryt this conquerour"
And in his oost / of Chiualrye the flour
Til þat he cam to Thebes / and alighte [leaf 14, back]
ffaire in a feeld / ther as he thoghte fighte
¶ But shortly / for to speken of this thyng'
With Creon) / which þat was of Thebes kyng'
He faught' and slow hym manly / as a knygh't'
In pleyn bataille / and putte the folk' to flygh't'
And by assaut' he wan the Citee after
And rente adoun / bothe wal / and sparre / and rafter
And to the ladyes / he restored agayn
The bones / of hir freendes / þat were slayn
To doon obsequies / as was tho the gyse
But it weere al to long' for to deuyse
The grete clamour / and the waymentynge
That the ladyes made / at the brennynge
Of the bodies / and the grete honour

That Theseus / the noble Conquerour
Dooth to the ladys / whan they from hym wente
But shortly / for to telle is myn entente
¶ Whan þat this worthy duc' this Theseus
Hath Creon' slayn / and wonne Thebes thus
Stille in that feeld / he took al nyght his reste
And dide with al the / contree / as hym leste
¶ To ransake in the taas / of bodies dede
Hem for to strepe / of harneys / and of wede
The pilours / diden bisynesse / and cure
After the bataille / and disconfiture
And so bifel / in the taas they founde
Thurgh girt' with many a greuous blody wowndo
Two yonge knyghtes / liggynge by and by
Bothe in oon armes / wroght ful richely
Of whiche two / Arcita highte that oon
And that oother knyght' highte Palamon
Nat fully quyk / ne fully deed they weere
But by hir Cote armures / and by hir geere
The heraudes / knewe hem best in special
As they þat weren / of the blood roial
Of Thebes / and of sustren two yborn
Out of the taas / the pilours han hem torn
And han hem caryed / softe vn to the tento
Of Theseus / and he ful soone hem sente
To Atthenes / to dwellen in prisoñ [leaf 15]
Perpetuelly / he nolde no raunsoñ
¶ And whan this worthy duc / hath thus ydoon
He took his oost / and hom he ryt anoon
With laurer corouned / as a conquerour
And there he lyueth / in ioye / and in honour
Terme of his lyf / what nedeth wordes mo
And in a tour / in angwissh and in wo
Dwellen this Palamon / and eek Arcite
ffor euere moore / ther may no gold hem quyte
¶ This passeth yeer by yeer / and day by day

Til it fil ones / in a morwe of May
That Emelye / þat fairer was to seene
Than is the lilie / vp on his stalke greene
And fressher than the May / with floures newe
ffor with the Rose colour stroof hir hewe
I noot which was / the fairer of hem two
Er it were day / as was hir wone to do
She was arysen / and al redy dight
ffor May wol haue / no slogardye a nyght
The seson pryketh / euery gentil herte
And maketh it out of his sleep to sterte
And seith arys / and do thyn obseruance
This maketh Emelye / haue remembrance
To doon honour to May / and for to ryse
Yclothed was she fressh / for to deuyse
Hir yelow heer / was broyded in a tresse
Bihynde hir bak a yerde long I gesse
And in the gardyn / at the sonne vp riste
She walketh vp and doun / and as hir liste
She gadreth floures / party white and rede
To make a subtil gerland for hir hede
And as an Aungel / heuenysshly she soong
¶ The grete tour / þat was so thikke and strong
Which of the Castel / was the chief dongeon
Ther as the knyghtes / weren in prison
Of whiche I tolde yow / and tellen shal
Was euene ioynant / to the gardyn wal
Ther as this Emelye / hadde hir pleyyng
Bright was the sonne / and cleer / in that mornyng
And Palamon / this woful prisoner [leaf 15, back]
As was his wone / by leue of his Gailler
Was risen / and romed in a chambre an heigh
In which / he al the noble Citee seigh
And eek the gardyn / ful of braunches greene
Ther as / the fresshe Emelye the sheene
Was in hir walk / and romed vp and down

This sorweful prisoner / this Palamon)
Gooth in the chambre / romyng to and fro
And to hym self / compleynyng' of his wo
That he was born / ful ofte he seyde allas
And so bifel / by auenture / or cas
That thurgh a wyndow / thikke of many a barre
Of Iren greet' and square as any sparre
He caste his eye / vp on Emelya
And ther with al he bleynte / and cryde .A.
As thogh / he stongen weere / vn to the herte
¶ And with that cry / Arcite anoon vp sterte
And seyde cosyn myn / what eyleth thee
That art so pale / and deedly on to see
Why cridestow / who hath thee doon offence
ffor goddes loue / tak al in pacience
Oure prison / for it may noon oother be
ffortune hath yeuen vs this aduersitee
Som wikked aspect' or disposicion)
Of Saturne / by som constellacion)
Hath yeuen vs this / al thogh we hadde it sworn
So stood the heuene / whan þat we were born
We mote endure it' this is the short and playn
This Palamon) answerde / and seyde agayn
¶ Cosyn for sothe / of this opinioñ
Thow hast' a vayn ymaginacion)
This prison) / caused me noght to crye
But I was hurt right now / thurgh out myn Iye
In to myn herte / that wol my bane be
The fairnesse / of that lady þat I se
Yond in the gardyn / romen to and fro
Is cause / of al my cryyng' and my wo
I noot' wher she be womman / or goddesse
But Venus / is it soothly as I gesse
And ther with al / on knees down he fil [leaf 16]
And seyde / Venus if it be thy wil
Yow in this gardyn / thus to transfigure

Bifore me / sorweful wrecched creature
Out of this prison / help þat we may scape
And if so be / my destynee be shape
By eterne word / to dyen in prison
Of oure lynage / haue som compassion
That is so lowe ybrought by tirannye
¶ And with that word / Arcite gan espye
Where as this lady / romed to and fro
And with that sighte / hir beautee hurte hym so
That if þat Palamon / was wounded soore
Arcite is hurt. as muche as he / or moore
And with a syk /. he seyde pitously
The fresshe beautee / sleeth me sodeynly
Of hire / þat rometh in the yonder place
And but I haue / hir mercy / *and* hir grace
That I may seen hire / at the leeste weye
Fnam but deed / ther nys namoore to seye
¶ This Palamon / whan he tho wordes herde
Despitously he loked / and answerde
Wheither seistow this / in ernest or in pley
¶ Nay quod Arcite / in ernest by my fey
God help me so / me list ful yuele pleye
This Palamon / gan knytte his browes tweye
¶ It were to thee quod he / no greet honour
ffor to be fals / ne for to be traytour
To me / that am thy cosyn *and* thy brother
Ysworn ful depe / and ech of vs til oother
That neuere / for to dyen in the peyne
Til þat the deeth / departe shal vs tweyne
Neither of vs / in loue to hyndre oother
Ne in noon oother caas / my leeue brother
But þat thow sholdest trewely forthre me
In euery caas / and I shal forthren thee
This was thyn ooth / as myn also certeyn
I woot right wel / thow darst it nat withseyn
Thus artow of my conseil / out of doute

And now / thow woldest falsly been aboute
To loue my lady / whom I loue and serue [leaf 16, back]
And euere shal / til þat myn herte sterue
Now certes false Arcite / thow shalt nat so
I loued hire first and tolde thee my wo
As to my conseil / and my brother sworn
To forthre me / as I haue told biforn
ffor which / thow art ybounden / as a knyght
To helpe me / if it laye in thy myght
Or ellis artow fals / I dar wel sayn
This Arcite / ful proudly spak agayn
¶ Thow shalt quod he / be rather fals than I:
And thow art fals / I telle thee outrely
ffor paramour / I loued hire first er thow
What wiltow seyn / thow woost nat yet now
Wheither she be a womman / or goddesse
Thyn is / affeccion of holynesse
And myn is loue / as to a creature
ffor which / I tolde thee myn auenture
As to my cosyn / and my brother sworn
I pose / that thow louedest hire biforn
Wostow nat wel / the olde clerkes sawe
That who shal / yeue a louere any lawe // Quis legem det amantibus.
Loue is a gretter lawe / by my pan
Than may be yeue / to any erthely man
And therfore / posityf lawe / and swich decree
Is broke al day for loue / in ech degree
A man moot nedes loue / maugree his heed
He may nat fleen it / thogh he sholde be deed
Al be she mayde / wydwe / or ellis wyf
And eek it is nat likly / al thy lyf
To stonden in hir grace / namoore shal .I.
ffor wel thow woost thy self verraily
That thow and I / been dampned to prisoñ
Perpetuelly / vs gayneth no raunsoñ
We stryue / as dide the houndes for the booñ

They foghte alday / and yet hir part was noon
Ther cam a kyte / whil þat they were so wrothe
That bar awey the boon / bitwix hem bothe
And therfore / at the kynges court my brother
Ech man for hym self / ther is noon oother
Loue if thee lest'. for I loue / and ay shal [leaf 17]
And soothly / leue brother this is al
Heere in this prison) / moote we endure
And euerich of vs / take his auenture
¶ Greet was the stryf / and long bitwix hem tweye
If þat I hadde leyser for to seye
But to theffect / it happed on a day
To telle it yow / as shortly as I may
A worthy duc'. þat highte Parotheus
That felawe was / vn to duc Theseus
Syn thilke day / þat they were children lyte
Was come to Atthenes / his felawe to visite
And for to pleye / as he was wont to do
ffor in this world / he loued no man so
And he loued hym / as tendrely agayn
So wel they loued / as olde bookes sayn
That whan þat oon was deed / soothly to telle
His felawe wente / and soghte hym down in helle
But of that storie / list me noght to write
Duc Perotheus / loued wel Arcite
And hadde hym knowe at Thebes / yeer oy yere
And finally / at requeste and prayere
Of Perotheus / with outen any raunson)
Duc Theseus / hym leet' out of prison)
ffrely to goon / wher þat hym liste ouer al
In swich a gyse / as I yow tellen shal
This was the forward / pleynly for tendite
Bitwixe Theseus / and hym Arcite
That if so weere þat Arcite weere yfounde
Euere in his lyf / by day / or nyght' or stounde
In any contree / of this Theseus

And he weere caught'. it was acorded thus
That with a swerd / he sholde lese his heed
Ther nas noon oother / remedye ne reed
But taketh his leue / and homward he hym spedde
Lat hym be war / his nekke lyth to wedde
¶ How greet a sorwe / suffreth now Arcite
The deeth he feeleth / thurgh his herte smyte
He wepeth / wayleth / cryeth pitously
To sleen hym self / he wayteth pryuely
He seyde allas / the day þat I was born [leaf 17, back]
Now is my prisoun / worse than biforn
Now is me shape / eternally to dwelle
Noght in purgatorie / but in helle
Allas / þat euere knew I Parotheus
ffor ellis / hadde I dwelled with Theseus
Yfettred in his prisoun eueremo
Thanne hadde I been in blisse / and nat in wo
Oonly the sighte of hire / whom þat I serue
Thogh þat I neuere / hir grace may disserue
Wolde haue suffised / right ynogh for me
¶ O deere cosyn / Palamon / quod he
Thyn is the victorie / of this auenture
fful blisfully in prisoñ maystow dure
In prison? / nay certes / but in paradys
Wel hath ffortune / yturned thee / the dys
That hast the sighte of hire / and I thabsence
ffor possible is / syn thow hast hire presence
And art a knyght' a worthy and an able
That by som caas / syn ffortune is chaungeable
Thow mayst to thy desir / som tyme atteyne
But I / that am exiled and bareyne
Of alle grace / and in so greet despeyr
That ther nys Erthe / water / fyr / ne Eyr
Ne creature / that of hem maked is
That may me helpe / or do confort in this
Wel oghte I sterue / in wanhope / and distresse

ffarwel my lyf / my lust' and my gladnesse
¶ Allas why pleynen folk so / in commune
On purueiance of god / or of ffortune
That yeueth hem ful ofte / in many a gyse
Wel bettre / than they kan hem self deuyse
¶ Som man desireth / for to haue richesse
That cause is ofte / of his moerdre / or gret siknesse
And som man wolde / out of his prison fayn
That in his hous / is of his meynee slayn
Infinite harmes / been in this matere
We woot' nat' what thyng' þat we prayen heere
We fare as he / þat dronke is as a Mous
A dronke man woot wel / he hath an hous
But he noot / which the righte wey is thider [leaf 18]
And to a dronke man / the wey is slider
And certes / in this world / so faren we
We seken faste / after felicitee
But we goon wrong' ful ofte trewely
Thus may we seyn alle / and nameliche .I.
That wende / and hadde a greet opinion)
That if I myghte / scapen fro prison)
Thanne hadde I been in ioye / and parfit heele
Ther now / I am exiled fro my wele
Syn þat / I may nat seen yow Emelie
I nam but deed / ther nys no remedie
¶ Vp on that oother syde Palamon
Whan þat he wiste / Arcite was agon
Swich sorwe he maketh / þat the grete tour
Resowneth / of his yowlyng' and clamour
The pure fettres / of his shynes grete
Were / of his bittre salte teeris wete
Allas quod he / Arcita cosyn myn
Of al oure stryf / god woot' the fruyt is thyn
Thow walkest now / in Thebes at thy large
And of my wo / thow yeuest litel charge
Thow maystt' syn thow hast wisdom / and manhede

Assemblen / al the folk' of oure kynrede
And make a werre / so sharp / on this Citee
That by som auenture / or som tretee
Thow mayst haue hire / to lady and to wyf
ffor whom / þat I moste nedes lese my lyf
ffor as by wey / of possibilitee
Sith thow art' at thy large / of prison' free
And art a lord / greet is thyn auantage
Moore than is myn / that sterue here in a cage
ffor I moot wepe / and waille whil I lyue
With al the wo / þat prison may me yeue
And eek with peyne / þat loue me yeueth also
That doubleth / al my torment' and my wo
Ther with / the fyr of Ialousie vp sterte
With Inne his brest' and hente hym by the herte
So woodly / þat he lyk was to byholde
The Boxtree / or the Asshen dede / and colde
¶ Thanne seyde he / o crewel goddes / þat gouerne [leaf 18, back]
This world / with byndyng' of youre word eterne
And writen / in the table of Atthamañt
Youre parlement /. and youre eterne grañt'
What is man kynde / moore vn to yow holde
Than is the sheepe / þat rowketh in the folde
ffor slayn is man / right as another beest'
And dwelleth eek' in prison and arrest'
And hath siknesse / and greet aduersitee
And ofte tymes / giltlees pardee
¶ What gouernance / is in this prescience
That giltlees / tormenteth Innocence
And yet' encreeceth this / al my penance
That man is bounden / to his obseruance
ffor goddes sake / to letten of his wille
Ther as a beest' may al his lust fulfille
And whan a beest is deed / it hath no peyne
But man after his deeth / moot wepe and pleyne
Thogh in this world / he haue care and wo

With outen doute / it moot stonden so
The answere of this / lete I to diuynys
But wel I woot þat in this world / greet pyne is
¶ Allas / I se a serpent or a theef
That many a trewe man / hath doon mescheef
Goon at his large / and where hym lust may turne
But I moot been in prison / thurgh Saturne
And eek thurgh Juno / Ialous / and eek wood
That hath destroyed / wel neigh al the blood
Of Thebes / with his waste walles wyde
And Venus / sleeth me / on that oother syde
ffor Ialousie / and feere / of hym Arcite
¶ Now wol I stynte / of Palamon alite
And lete hym / in his prison stille dwelle
And of Arcita / forth I wol yow telle
¶ The Somer / and the nyghtes longe
Encreecen / double wise / the peynes stronge
Bothe of the louere / and the prisoner
I noot which hath / the sorwefuller myster
ffor soothly for to seyn / this Palamon
Perpetuelly / is dampned to prison
In cheynes / and in fettres / to been deed [leaf 19]
And Arcite / is exiled / vp on his heed
ffor euere mo / as out of that contree
Ne neueremo / ne shal his lady see
¶ Yow loueris / axe I now / this question
Who hath the worse / Arcite / or Palamon
That oon may seen his lady / day by day
But in prison / moot he dwelle alwey
That oother where hym list may ride or go
But seen his lady / shal he neuere mo
Now demeth as yow list ye þat kan
ffor I wol telle forth / as .I. bigan

¶ Whan þat Arcite / to Thebes comen was
ffful ofte a day / he swelte / and seyde allas
ffor seen his lady / shal he neuere mo
And shortly / to concluden al his wo
So muchel sorwe / hadde neuere creature
That is or shal / whil þat the world may dure
¶ His sleepe / his mete / his drynke / is hym biraft
That leene he weex / and dryc as is a shaft
Hise eyen holwe / and grisly to biholde
His hewe falow / and pale as asshen colde
And solitarie he was / and euere alloone
And waillynge al the nyght. makynge his moone
And if he herde / soong or Instrument
Thanne wolde he wepe / he myghte nat be stent
So feble eek were his spiritz / and so lowe
And chaunged so / þat no man koude knowe
His speche / nor his voys / thogh men it herde
And in his gere / for al the world he ferde
Nat oonly / lyk the loueris maladye
Of Hereos / but rather lyk Manye Mania
Engendred / of humour malencolyk
Biforn his Celle fantastyk
And shortly / turned was / al vp so down
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of hym / this woful louere daun Arcite
¶ What sholde I al day / of his wo endite
Whanne he endured hadde / a yeer / or two
This cruel torment and this peyne and wo
At Thebes in his contree / as I seyde [leaf 19, back]
Vp on a nyght in sleep / as he hym leyde
Hym thoughte / how þat the wynged god Mercurye
Biforn hym stood / and bad hym to be murye
His slepy yerde / in honde he bar vp righte
An hat he wered / vp on his herys brighte

Arrayed was this god / as he took keepe
As he was / whan þat Argus took his sleepe
And seyde hym thus / to Atthenes shaltow wende
Ther is thee shapen / of thy wo an ende
¶ And with that word / Arcite wook and sterte
Now trewely / how sore þat me smerte
Quod he / to Atthenes right now wol I fare
Ne for the drede of deeth / shal I nat spare
To se my lady / þat I loue and serue
In hir presence / I recche nat to sterue
¶ And with that word / he caughte a greet Mirour
And saugh / þat chaunged was al his colour
And saugh his visage / al in another kynde
And right anoon / it ran hym in his mynde
That sith his face / was so disfigured
Of maladie / the which he hadde endured
He myghte wel / if þat he bar hym lowe
Lyue in Atthenes / euer emoore vnknowe
And seen his lady / wel ny / day by day
And right anoon / he chaunged his array
And cladde hym / as a poure laborer
And al allone / saue oonly a Squyer
That knew his pryuetee / and al his cas
Which was disgised / pourely as he was
To Atthenes / is he goon / the nexte way
And to the Court' he wente vp on a day
And at the gate / he profreth his seruyse
To drugge and drawe / what so men wol deuyse
¶ And shortly / of this matere / for to seyn
He fil in office / with a Chambreleyn
The which / þat dwellyng was with Emelye
ffor he was wys / and koude soone espye
Of euery seruant' which þat serueth here
Wel koude he / hewen wode / and water bere
ffor he was yong'. and myghty for the nones [leaf 20]
And ther to / he was strong' and byg' of bones

To doon / what any wight' kan hym deuyse
A yeer / or two / he was in this seruyse
Page of the chambre / of Emelie the brighte
And Philostrate / he seyde þat he highte
¶ But half so wel biloued a man / as he
Ne was ther neuere in Court' of his degree
He was so gentil / of condicion)
That thurgh out al the Court' was his renon)
They seiden / þat it were a charitee
That Theseus / wolde enhauncen his degree
And putten hym / in worshipful seruyse
Ther as he myghte / his vertu excercise
And thus with Inne a while / his name is spronge
Bothe of his dedes / and his goode tonge
That Theseus / hath taken hym so ner
That of his chambre / he made hym a Squier
And gaf hym gold / to mayntene his degree
And eek men broghte hym / out of his contree
ffro yeer to yeer / ful pryuely his rente
But' honestly / and sleighly / he it spente
That no man wondred / how þat he it hadde
And thre yeer in this wise / his lyf he ladde
And bar hym so / in pees / and ek in werre
Ther was no man / that Theseus hath derre
And in this blisse / lete I now Arcite
And speke I wole / of Palamon alite
¶ In derknesse / and horrible / and strong' prison)
This seuen yeer / hath seten Palamon)
fforpyned / what for wo / and for distresse
Who feeleth / double soor / and heuynesse
But Palamon / that loue destreyneth so
That wood out of his wit' he gooth for wo
And eek ther to / he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly / nat oonly for a yer
Who koude ryme / in englissh proprely
His martirdom / for sothe it am noght I

Ther fore I passe / as lightly / as I may
¶ It fil / þat / in that Seuenthe yeer of May
The thridde nyght'. as olde bokes seyn [leaf 20, back]
That al this storie / tellen moore pleyn 1464
Were it by auenture / or destynee
As whan a thyng is shapen / it shal be
That soone after the mydnyght' Palamon
By helpyng of a freend / brak his prison 1468
And fleeth the Citee / faste as he may go
ffor he hadde yeue / his Gailler drynke so
Of a Clarree / maad of certeyn wyn 1471
With Nercotikes / and opye / of Thebes fyn // Opium Thebaicum.
That al that nyght'. thogh þat men wolde hym shake
The Gailler sleepe / he myghte noght awake
¶ And thus he fleeth / as faste as euere he may
The nyght was short' and faste by the day 1476
That nedes cost' he moste hym seluen hyde
And til a groue / faste ther bisyde
With dreedful foot' thanne stalketh Palamon
ffor shortly / this was his opynyon 1480
That in that groue / he wolde hym hyde al day
And in the nyght' thanne wolde he take his way
To Thebesward / his freendes for to preye
On Theseus / to helpe hym to werreye 1484
And shortly / outher he wolde lese his lyf'
Or wynnen Emelie / vn to his wyf
This is theffect' and his entente pleyn
¶ Now wol I turne / to Arcite ageyn 1488
That litel wiste / how neigh þat was his care
Til þat ffortune / hadde broght hym / in the snare
¶ The bisy larke / messager of day
Salueth in hir song' the morwe gray 1492
And firy Phebus / riseth vp so brighte
That al the Orient'. laugheth of the lighte
And with his stremes / dryeth in the greues
The siluer dropes / hangynge on the leues 1496

And Arcita / that in the Court roial
With Theseus / Squyer principal
Is risen / and looketh on the murye day
And for to doon / his obseruance to May
Remembrynge / on the point of his desir
He on a Courser / startlynge as the fir
Is riden in to the feldes / hym to pleye [leaf 21]
Out of the Court. were it a myle / or tweye
And to the groue / of which þat I yow tolde
By auenture / his wey he gan to holde
To maken hym / a gerland of the greues
Were it of wodebynde / or hawethorn leues
And loude he soong. ayein the sonne shene
May / with alle thy floures / and thy grene
Wel come be thow / faire fresshe May
In hope / þat I som grene gete may
And from his courser / with a lusty herte
In to the groue / ful hastily he sterte
And in a path / he rometh vp and doun
Ther as by auenture / this Palamon
Was in a bussh̄ / þat no man myghte hym se
ffor soore afered / of his deeth was he
No thyng knew he / þat it was Arcite
God woot he wolde haue trowed it ful lite
But sooth is seyd / go sithen many yeris
That feeld hath eyen / and the wode hath erys
It is ful fair / a man to bere hym euene
ffor alday meeten men / at vnset steuene
fful litel woot Arcite / of his felawe,
That was so neigh / to herknen al his sawe
ffor in the bussh̄ / he sitteth now ful stille
¶ Whan þat Arcite / hadde romed al his fille
And songen al the roundel lustily
In to a studie / he fil sodeynly
As doon thise louerys / in hir queynte gerys
Now in the crope / now down in the brerys

Now vp / now down / as boket in a welle
Right as the friday / soothly for to telle
Now it shyneth / now it reyneth faste
Right so / kan gery Venus ouercaste
The hertes of hir folk. right as hir day
Is gerful / right so chaungeth she array
Selde is the friday / al the wike ylike
¶ Whan þat Arcite hadde songe / he gan to syke
And sette hym down / with outen any moore
Allas quod he / that day / þat I was bore
How longe Iuno / thurgh thy crueltee [leaf 21, back]
Woltow werreyen / Thebes the Citee
Allas / ybroght is to confusion
The blood roial / of Cadme and Amphion
¶ Cadmus / which þat was the firste man
That Thebes bulte / and first bigan
And of the Citee / first was crowned kyng
Of his lynage am I / and his of-spryng
By verray ligne / as of the stok roial
And now I am / so caytyf and so thral
That he þat is / my mortal enemy
I serue hym / as his Squyer pourely
And yet dooth Iuno / me wel moore shame
ffor I dar noght biknowe myn owen name
But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite
Now highte I Philostrate / noght worth a myte
¶ Allas thow felle Mars / allas Juno
Thus hath youre Ire / oure lynage al fordo
Saue oonly me / and wrecchid Palamon
That Theseus / martireth in prison
And ouer al this / to sleen me outrely
Loue hath his firy dart so brennyngly
Ystiked / thurgh my trewe careful herte
That shapen was my deeth / erst than my sherte
Ye sleen me with youre eyen / Emelye
Ye been the cause / wherfore þat .I. dye

Of al the remenant' of myn oother care
Ne sette I nought'. the mountaunce of a tare
So þat I koude doon aught'. to youre plesaunce
And with that word / he fil down in a traunce
A longe tyme / and afterward he vp sterte
¶ This Palamon / that thoughte / þat thurgh his herte
He felte a coold swerd / sodeynly glyde
ffor Ire he quook'. no lenger wolde he byde
And whan þat he had herd / Arcites tale
As he were wood / with face deed and pale
He stirte hym vp / out of the buskes thikke
And seyde Arcite / false traytour wikke
Now artow hent' that louest my lady so
ffor whom þat I haue / al this peyne and wo
And art my blood / and to my conseil sworn [leaf 22]
As I ful ofte / haue toold thee her biforn
And hast byiaped here / duc Theseus
And falsly / chaunged hast thy name thus
I wol be deed / or ellis thow shalt dye
Thow shalt' noght / loue my lady Emelye
But I wol loue hire oonly / and namo
ffor I am Palamon / thy mortal foo
And thogh þat I / no wepne haue in this place
But out of prison / am astert by grace
I drede noght' þat outher thow shalt dye
Or thow ne shalt' noght louen Emelye
Chees which thow wolt' or thow shalt' noght asterte
¶ This Arcite / with ful despitous herte
Whan he hym knew / and hadde his tale herd
As fiers as leon / pulled out his swerd
And seyde thus / by god þat sitteth aboue
Nere it þat thow art syk' and wood for loue
And eek' þat thow / no wepne hast in this place
Thow sholdest neuere / out of this groue pace
That thow ne sholdest' dyen of myn hond
ffor I diffye / the seuretee and the bond

Which þat thow seist þat I haue maad to thee
What verray fool / thynk wel þat loue is free
And I wol loue hire / maugree al thy myght
¶ But for as muche / as thow art a worthy knyght
And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille
Haue here my trouthe / tomorwe I nyl nat faille
With outen wityng of any oother wight
That here / I wol be founden / as a knyght
And bryngen harneys / right ynogh for thee
And chees the beste / and leef the worste to me
And mete and drynke / this nyght wol I brynge
Ynogh for thee / and clothes for thy beddynge
And if so be / þat thow my lady wynne
And sle me in this wode / ther I am Inne
Thow mayst wel haue thy lady / as for me
¶ This Palamon answerde / I graunte it thee
And thus they been departed / til amorwe
Whan ech of hem / hadde leyd his feith to borwe
O Cupide / out of alle charitee [leaf 22, back]
O regne / that wolde no felawe haue to thee
fful sooth is seyd / þat loue ne lordshipe
Wol noght his thankes / haue no felaweshipe
Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamon
¶ Arcite / is riden anoon / vn to the town
And on the morwe / er it were dayes lyght
fful priuely / two harneys hath he dyght
Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld / bitwix hem tweyne
And on his hors / allone / as he was born
He carieth al this harneys / hym biforn
And in the groue / at tyme and place yset
This Arcite / and this Palamon been met
¶ To chaungen / gan the colour in hir face
Right as the hunterys / in the regne of Trace
That stonden at the gappe / with a spere
Whanne hunted is / the leon or the Bere

And hereth hym / come russhynge in the greues
And breketh / bothe bowes / and the leues
And thynketh / here cometh my mortal enemy
With oute faille / he moot be deed / or .I.
ffor outher / I moot sleen hym / at the gappe
Or he moot sle me / if þat me myshappe
So ferden they / in chaungyng' of hir hewe
As fer / as euerich / oother of hem knewe
¶ Ther nas no good day / ne no saluynge
But streight' with outen word / or rehersynge
Euerich of hem / heelp for to armen oother
As frendly / as he weere / his owene brother
And after that / with sharpe speres stronge
They foynen / ech at oother / wonder longe
Thou myghtest wene / þat this Palamon
In his fightynge were a wood leon
And as a crewel Tygre / was Arcite
As wilde boores / gonnen they to smyte
That frothen / whit as foom / for Ire wood
Vp to the Anclees / foghte they in hir blood
And in this wise / I lete hem fightyng dwelle
And forth I wole / of Theseus yow telle
¶ The destynee / Ministre general [leaf 23]
That executeth / in the world ouer al
The purueiance / that god hath seyn biforn
So stroong' it is / þat thogh the world hadde sworn
The contrarie of a thyng' by ye / or nay
Yet som tyme / it shal fallen on a day
That falleth nat eft / with Inne a thousand yeer
ffor certeinly / oure appetites heer
Be it of werre / or pees / or hate / or loue
Al is this ruled / by the sighte aboue
¶ This mene I now / by myghty Theseus
That for to hunten / is so desirus
And namely / at the grete hert in May
That in his bed / ther daweth hym no day

That he nys clad / and redy for to ryde
With hunte and horn / and houndes hym bisyde
ffor in his huntyng' hath he swich delit'
That it is / al his ioye and appetit' 1680
To been hym self / the grete hertes bane
ffor after Mars / he serueth now Diane
¶ Cleer was the day / as I haue told er this
And Theseus / with alle ioye and blys 1684
With his ypolita / the faire queene
And Emelie / clothed al in greene
On huntyng' be they riden roially
And to the groue / that stood ful faste by 1688
In which ther was an hert' as men hym tolde
Duc' Theseus / the streighte wey hath holde
And to the launde / he rideth hym ful right'
ffor thider was the hert' wont haue his flight' 1692
And ouer a brook / and so forth on his weye
This duc' wol han a cours at hym / or tweye
With houndes swiche / as þat hym list comaunde
And whan this duc'. was come vn to the launde 1696
Vnder the sonne he looketh / and anon
He was war / of Arcite and Palamon
That foghten breme as it were boles two
The brighte swerdes / wenten to and fro 1700
So hidously / that with the leeste strook'
It semed / as it wolde felle an ook'
But what they weere / no thyng he ne woot' [leaf 23, back]
This duc' his courser / with the spores smoot' 1704
And at a stert' he was bitwix hem two
And pulled out a swerd / and cryed Hoo
Namoore / vp on peyne / of lesyng of youre heed
By myghty Mars / he shal anon be deed 1708
That smyteth any strook / þat I may seen
But telleth me / what myster men ye been
That been so hardy / for to fighten heer
With outen Iuge / or oother officer 1712

As it weere in a lystes roially
¶ This Palamon / answerde hastily
And seyde / sire / what nedeth wordes mo
We haue the deeth disserued / bothe two
Two woful wrecches been we / two caytyues
That been encombred / of oure owene lyues
And as thow art' a rightful lord and Iuge
Ne yif vs / neither mercy ne refuge
But slee me first'. for seinte charitee
But slee my felawe eek / as wel as me
Or slee hym first'. for thogh thow knowe it lite
This is thy mortal foo / this is Arcite
That fro thy lond / is banysshed on his heed
ffor which / he hath deserued to be deed
ffor this is he / þat cam vn to thy yate
And seyde / þat he highte Philostrate
Thus hath he iaped thee / ful many a yeer
And thow. hast maked hym / thy chief Squyer
And this is he / þat loueth Emelye
ffor sith the day is come / þat I shal dye
I make pleynly / my confession)
That I am / thilke woful Palamon)
That hath thy prison) / broken wikkedly
I am thy mortal foo / and it am I
That loueth so hoote / Emelye the brighte
That I wol dyen / present in hir sighte
Wherfore I axe deeth / and my Iuwise
But slee my felawe / in the same wise
ffor bothe haue we / deserued to be slayn
¶ This worthy duc' answerde anoon agayn
And seyde / this is a short conclusion) [leaf 24]
Youre owene mouth / by youre confession)
Hath dampned yow / and I wol it recorde
It nedeth noght' to pyne yow with the corde
Ye shul be deed / by myghty Mars the rede
¶ The queene anoon / for verray wommanhede

Gan for to wepe / and so dide Emelye
And alle the ladies / in the compaignye
Greet pitee was it / as it thoughte hem alle
That euere swich a chaunce / sholde falle
ffor gentil men they weere / of greet estaat
And no thyng but for loue / was this debaat
And sawe / hir blody wowndes / wide and soore
And alle cryden / bothe lasse and moore
Haue mercy lord / vp on vs wommen alle
And on hir bare knees / adown they falle
And wolde haue kist his feet ther as he stood
Til at the laste / aslaked was his mood
ffor pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
And thogh he first for Ire quook and sterte
He hath considred / shorthly in a clause
The trespas of hem bothe / and eek the cause
And al thogh þat his Ire / hir gilt accused
Yet in his reson / he hem bothe excused
¶ As thus / he thoghte wel þat euery man
Wol helpe hym self in loue / if þat he kan
And eek / deliuere hym self / out of prison
And eek / his herte hadde compassion
Of wommen / for they wepten euere in oon
And in his gentil herte / he thoghte anoon
And softe vn to hym / self he seyde fy
Vp on a lord / that wol haue no mercy ¶ nota
But be a leon / bothe in word / and dede
To hem / that been in repentaunce and drede
As wel / as to a proud despitous man
That wol mayntene / that he first bigan
That lord / hath litel of discrecion
That in swich caas / kan no dyuysion
But weyeth pryde / and humblesse / after oon
And shortly / whan his Ire is thus agoon
He gan to loken vp / with eyen lighte [leaf 24, back]
And spak thise same wordes / al on highte

¶ The god of loue / a benedicitee
How myghty / and how greet a lord is he
Agayns his myght'. ther gayneth none obstacles
He may be clepid a god / for his miracles
ffor he kan maken / at his owene gyse
Of euerich herte / as þat hym list deuyse
¶ Lo here / this Arcite / and this Palamon
That quitly were / out of my prison
And myghte haue lyued in Thebes roially
And witen / I am hir mortal enemy
And þat hir deeth / lyth in my myght also
And yet hath loue / maugree hir eyen two
Broght hem hyder / bothe for to dye
Now looketh / is nat that' an heigh folye
¶ Who may been a fool / but if he loue
Bihoold for goddes sake / þat sit aboue
Se how they blede / be they noght wel arrayed
Thus hath hir lord / the god of loue ypayed
Hir wages / and hir fees / for hir seruyse
And yet they wenen to be ful wyse
That seruen loue / for aught þat may bifalle
But this is yet' the beste game of alle
That she / for whom / they haue this Iolitee
Kan hem ther fore / as muche thank as me
She woot namoore / of al this hoote fare
By god / than woot' a cokkow of an hare
But al moot been assayed / hoot and coold
A man moot been a fool / or yong' or oold
I woot it by my self / ful yoore agoon
ffor in my tyme / a seruant was I oon
And ther fore / syn I knowe of loues peyne
And woot how soore / it kan a man distreyne
As he þat hath been caught' ofte in his laas
I yow foryeue / al hoolly this trespas
At requeste of the queene / þat kneeleth heere
And eek of Emelye / my suster deere

And ye shal bothe anoon / vn to me swere
That neuere mo / ye shal my contree dere
Ne make werre vp on me / nyght nor day [leaf 25]
But been my freendes / in al that ye may
I yow foryeue / this trespas euerydel
And they hym sworen / his axing faire and wel
And hym of lordshipe / and of mercy preyde
And he hem graunteth grace / and thanne he seyde
¶ To speke of roial lynage / and richesse
Thogh þat she weere a queene / or a princesse
Ech of yow bothe / is worthy doutelees
To wedden whan tyme is / but nathelees
I speke / as for my suster Emelye
ffor whom / ye haue this stryf and Ialousye
Ye woot your self. she may nat wedden two
Atones / thogh ye fighten eueremo
That oon of yow / al be hym looth / or lief
He moot go pipen / in an yuy leef
This is to seyn / she may nat now haue bothe
Al be ye nevere so Ialous / ne so wrothe
And for thy / I yow putte in this degree
That ech of yow / shal haue his destynee
As hym is shape / and herkneth in what wyse
Lo here youre ende / of that I shal deuyse
¶ My wyl is this / for plat conclusion
With outen any replicacion
If that yow liketh / take it for the beste
That euerich of yow / shal goon where hym leste
ffrely / with outen raunsoñ / or daunger
And this day fifty wykes / fer ne neer
Euerich of yow / shal brynge an hundred knyghtes
Armed for listes / vp at alle rightes
Al redy / to darreyne hire by bataille
And this bihoote I yow / with outen faille
Vp on my trouthe / and as I am a knyght
That wheither of yow bothe / þat hath myght

This is to seyn / þat wheither he or thou
May with his hundred / as I spak of now
Sleen his contrarie / or out of lystes dryue
Thanne shal I yeue / Emelye to wyue
To whom þat ffortune / yeueth so fair a grace
The lystes / shal I maken in this place
And god so wisly / on my soule rewe [leaf 25, back]
As I shal / euene Iuge been and trewe
Ye shul noon oother ende / with me maken
That oon of yow ne / shall be deed / or taken
And if yow thynketh / this is well ysayd
Sey youre auys / and holdeth yow apayd
This is youre ende / and youre conclusion
¶ Who looketh lightly now / but Palamon
Who spryngeth vp for ioye / but Arcite
Who koude telle / or who koude it endite
The ioye / that is maked in the place
Whan Theseus / hath doon so fair a grace
But doun on knees / wente euery maner wight
And thonken hym / with al hir herte and myght
And namely the Thebans ofte sythe
And thus with good hope / and herte blythe
They take hir leeue / and homward gonne they ryde
To Thebes / with olde walles wyde

Explicit prima pars

Incipit pars secunda ☙

I trowe / men wolde deme it necligence
If I foryete / to tellen the despence
Of Theseus / that gooth so bisily
To maken vp the lystes / roially
That swich a noble Theatre / as it was
I dar wel seyn / in this world ther nas
The circuit a myle was aboute
Walled of stoon / and dyched al with oute
Round was the shape / in manere of compas

ffiul of degrees / the heighte of sixty paas
That whan a man / was set' on o degree
He lotted nogh' his felawe for to see
¶ Estward ther stood a gate / of Marbul wh.it
Westward / right swich another / in the oposit'
And shortly to concluden / swich a place
Was noon in erthe / as in so lite a space
ffor in the lond / ther was no crafty man [leaf 26]
That Geometrye / or Ars metrik kan
Ne purtreyour / ne keruere of ymages
That Theseus / ne yaf mete and wages
The Theatre / for to maken and deuyse
And for to doon / his ryte and sacrifise
He Estward hath / vp on the gate aboue
In worship of venus / goddesse of loue
Doon maad an Auter / and an oratorie
And on the westward / in memorie
Of Mars / he maked hath right swich another
That coste largely / of gold a fother
And Northward / in a touret' on the wal
Of Alabastre whit' and reed Coral
An oratorie / riche for to see
In worshipe / of Diane of chastitee
Hath Theseus / doon wroght' in noble Wise
¶ But yet hadde I forgeten / to deuyse
The noble keruyng / and the purtreit*ures*
The shape / the contenance / and the figures
That weren / in thise oratories thre
¶ ffirst / in the temple of Venus / maystow se
Wroght on the wal / ful pitous to biholde
The broken slepes / and the sykes colde
The sacred teerys / and the waymentynge
The firy strokes / of the desirynge
That loues seruantz / in this lyf enduren
The othes / that hir couenantz assuren
Plesance / and hope / desir / foolhardynesse

Beautee and youthe / baudrye / richesse
Charmes and force / lesynges / flaterye
Despense / bisynesse / and Ialousye
That wered / of yelowe gooldes a gerland
And a Cokkow / sittyng on hir hand
ffestes / Instrumentz / caroles / daunces
Lust and array / and alle the circumstaunces
Of loue / whiche þat I rekned / and rekne shal
By ordre / weren peynted on the wal
And mo than / I kan make of mencion
ffor soothly / al the Mount of Citheron
Ther Venus / hath hir principal dwellynge [leaf 26, back]
Was shewed on the wal / in purtreyynge
With al the gardyn / and the lustynesse
Nat was foryeten / the porter ydelnesse
Ne Narcisus the faire / of yoore agon
Ne yet / the folie / of kyng Salomon
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Ercules
Thenchantementz / of Medea and Circes
Ne of Turnus / with the hardy fiers corage
The ryche Cresus / caytif in seruage
¶ Thus may ye seen / þat wisdom ne richesse
Beautee / ne sleighte / strengthe hardynesse
Ne may with Venus / maken champartie
ffor as hir lust the world than may she gye
Lo all this folk / so caught were in hir laas
Til they for wo / ful ofte seyde allas
Suffiseth heere ensamples / oon or two
And though / I koude rekne a thousand mo
¶ The statue of Venus / glorious for to see (ad vid .i. mare)
Was naked / fletyng in the large See
And fro the nauele doun / al couered was
With wawes grene / and brighte as any glas
A Citole in hir right hand / hadde she
And on hir heed / ful semely for to se
A rose gerland / fressh / and wel smellynge

Aboue hir heed / hir dowues flikerynge
Biforn hire stood / hir sone Cupido
Vp on his shuldres / wynges hadde he two
And blynd he was / as it is ofte seene
A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and keene
¶ Why sholde I nat as wel / eek telle yow al
The purtreyture / þat was vp on the wal
With Inne the temple / of myghty Mars the rede
Al peynted was the wal / in lengthe and brede
Lyk to the cestres / of the grisly place
That highte the grete temple / of Mars in Trace
In thilke colde / frosty Region
Ther as Mars / hath his souereyn mansion
¶ ffirst on the wal / was peynted a fforest
In which ther dwelleth / neither man ne best
With knotty / knarry / bareyne trees olde [leaf 27]
Of stubbes sharpe / and hidouse to biholde
In which / ther ran a rombul / in a swough
As thogh a storm / sholde bresten euery bough
And downward on an hil / vnder a bente
Ther stood the temple / of Mars armypotente.
Wroght al of burned steel / of which the entree
Was long and streyt and gastly for to see
And ther out cam a rage / and swich a veze .i. impetus
That it made / al the gate for to rese
The Northren light in at the dores shoon
ffor wyndow on the wal / ne was ther noon
Thurgh which men myghten / any light discerne
The dore was al / of Athamant eterne
Yclenched / ouerthwart and endelong/
With Iren togh / and for to make it strong
Euery piler / the temple to sustene
Was tonne greet of Iren bright and shene
¶ Ther say I first. the dirke ymagynynge
Of felonye / and al the compassynge
The cruel Ire / reed as any gleede

The pike purs / and eek the pale drede
The smylere / with the knyf vnder the cloke
The shipne brennyng / with the blake smoke
The tresoun / of the mordryng in the bed
The open werre / with woundes al bibled
Contek / with blody knyf and sharpe manace
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place
¶ The sleere of hym self / yet saugh I ther
His herte blood / hath bathed al his heer
The nayl ydryuen / in the shode a nyght
The colde deeth / with mouth gapyng vp right
Amyddes of the temple / sat meschaunce
With disconfort and sory contenaunce
¶ Yet saugh I woodnesse / laughyng in his rage
Armed compleynt out hees / and fiers outrage
The caroyne in the bussh / with throte ycorue
A thousand slayn / and noght of qualm ystorue
The tiraunt with the praye / by force yraft
The town destroyed / ther was no thyng laft
¶ Yet saugh I brent. the shippes hoppesteres [leaf 27, back]
The hunte strangled / with the wilde beres
The sowe freten the child / right in the Cradel
The Cook yscalded / for al his longe ladel
¶ Naught was forgeten / by the Infortune of Marte
The Cartere / ouer ryden / with his Carte
Vnder the wheel / ful lowe he lay adown
Ther were also / of Martes deuysioun
The Barbour / and the Bochier and the Smyth
That forgeth sharpe swerdes / on his styth
¶ And al aboue / depeynted in a tour
Saugh I Conquest sittyng in greet honour
With the sharpe swerd / ouer his heed
Hangyngé / by a subtil twynes threed
¶ Depeynted was / the slaghtre of Iulius
Of grete Nero / and of Anthonius
Al be / þat thilke tyme / they were vnborn

Yet was hir deeth / depeynted ther biforn
By manacynge of Mars / right by figure
So was it shewed / in that purtreyture
As is depeynted / in the Sertres aboue
Who shal be slayn / or ellis deed for loue
Suffiseth oon ensample / in stories olde
I may nat rekne hem alle / thogh I wolde
¶ The Statue of Mars / vp on a Carte stood
Armed / and loked grym / as he were wood
And ouer his heed / ther shynen two figures
Of sterres / þat been clepyd in Scriptures
That oon Puella / that oother Rubeus
This god of armes / was arrayed thus
A wolf ther stood / bifore hym at his feet
With eyen rede / and of a man he eet
With subtil pencel / was depeynted this storie
In redoutynge of Mars / and of his glorie
¶ Now to the temple / of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I kan / I wol me haste
To telle yow / al the discripsioun
Depeynted been the walles / vp and doun
Of huntyng and of shamefast chastitee
Ther saw .I. / how woful Calistopee
Whan þat Diane / agreued was with here [leaf 28]
Was turned / fro a womman / til a Bere
And after was she maad / the lode sterre // Vrsa maior
Thus was it peynted / I kan seye yow no ferre
Hir sone is eek a sterre / as men may see
Ther saw I Dane / yturned to a tree
I mene nat / the goddesse diane
But Penneus doghter / which þat highte Dane
¶ Ther saw I Attheon / an hert ymaked
ffor vengeaunce / þat he saw Diane al naked
I seigh / how þat hise houndes haue hym caught
And freten hym / for þat they knewe hym naught
¶ Yet peynted was / a litel ferther moor

How Atthalante / hunted the wilde boor
And Meleagree / and many another mo
ffor which Diane / wroghte hym care and wo
Ther saw .I. many another wonder storie
The whiche / me list nat drawen to memorie
¶ This goddesse on herꝭ ful hye seetꝭ
With smale houndes / al aboute hir feetꝭ
And vnder nethe hir feetꝭ. she hadde a moone.
Wexinge it was / and sholde wanye soone
In gaude grene / hir statue yclothed was
With bowe in honde / and arwes in a cas
Hir eyen caste she / ful lowe adown
Ther Pluto / hath his dirke Regioun
A womman trauailyngꝭ was hir biforn
But for hir child / so longe was unborn
ffful pitously / lucina gan she calle
And seyde help / for thow mayst best of alle
Wel koude he peynte lyfly / that it wroghte
With many a floryn / he the hewes boghte
¶ Now been thise listes maad / and Theseus
That at his grete costꝭ arrayed thus
The temples / and the Theatre euery del
Whan it was doon / hym liked wonder wel
But stynte I wole / of Theseus alite
And speke of Palamon / and of Arcite
¶ The day approcheth / of hir retournynge
That euerich / sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge
The bataille to darreyne / as I yow tolde [leaf 28, back
And til Atthenes / hir couenant for to holde
Hath euerich of hem / broght a hundred knyghtes
Wel armed for the werre / at alle rightes
And sikerly / ther trowed many a man
That neuere sithen / þat the world bigan
As for to speke / of knyghthod of hir hond
As fer / as god hath maked see and lond
Nas of so fewe / so noble a compaignye

ffor euery wight þat loued chiualrye
And wolde his thankes / han a passant name
Hath prayd / that he myghte been of that game
And wel was hym / þat ther to chosen was
ffor if ther fille / tomorwe swich a cas
Ye knowen wel / þat euery lusty knyght/
That loueth paramours / and hath his myght
Were it in Engelond / or ellis where
They wolde hir thankes / wilnen to be there
To fighten for a lady / benedicitee
It were a lusty sighte / for to sée
¶ And right so / ferden they with Palamon
With hym ther wenten / knyghtes many oon
Som wol ben armed / in an haubergeon
And in a Brestplate / and in a light gypon
And som wol haue / a piere plates large
And som wol haue / a Pruce sheeld / or a targe
Som wol been armed / on his legges weel
And haue an Ax / and som a Maas of steel
Ther nys no newe gyse / þat it nas oold
Armed were they / as I haue yow toold
Euerich / after his opinyon
¶ Ther maystow seen / comynge with Palamon
Lygurge hym self the grete kyng of Trace
Blak was his beerd / and manly was his face
The cercles of his eyen / in his heed
They gloweden / bitwixen yelow and reed
And lyk a griffon / loked he aboute
With keempe herys / on his browes stoute
His lymes grete / his brawnes / harde and stronge
Hys shuldres brode / hise armes rounde and longe
And as the gyse was / in his contree [leaf 29]
fful hye / vp on a Chaar of gold stood he
With foure white Boles / in the trays
In stide of Cotearmure / ouer his harnays
With nayles yelwe / and brighte as any gold

He hadde a Berys Skyn / colblak / for old
His longe heer / was kembed bihynde his bak
As any Rauenes fetthere / it shoon for blak 2144
A wrethe of gold / greet of huge wighte
Vp on his heed / and ful of stones brighte
Of fyne Rubyes / and of dyamaũntz
Aboute his Chaar / they wente white Alauntz 2148
Twenty and mo / as grete as any Steer
To hunten at the leon / and the deer
And folwed hym / *with* mosel faste ybounde
Colered of gold / and turrettes filed rounde 2152
An hundred lordes / hadde he in his route
Armed ful wel / with hertes stierne and stoute
¶ With Arcita / in stories as men fynde
The grete Emetrius / the kyng of Inde 2156
Vp on a Steede bay / trapped in steel
Couered in a clooth of gold / dyapred weel
Cam ridynge / lyk the god of Armes Mars
His cote armure / was of clooth of Tars 2160
Couched *with* perlys white / and rounde and grete
His sadel was / of brend gold newe ybete
A Mantelet vp on his shulder hangynge
Bretful of Rubies reede / as fyr sparklynge 2164
His crispe heer / lyk rynges was yronne
And that was yelow / and glitred as the sonne
His nose was heigh / hise eyen bright Citryn
His lyppes rounde / his colour was sangwyn 2168
A fewe fraknes / in his face yspreynd
Bitwixen yelow / and som del blak ymeynd
And as a leon / he his lookyng caste
Of .xxv. yeer / his age I caste 2172
His beerd / was wel bigonne for to sprynge
His voys / was as a trompe thonderynge
Vp on his heed / he wered of laurer grene
A gerland fressh / and lusty for to seene 2176
Vp on his hand / he bar for his deduyt [leaf 20, back]

An Egle tame / as any lilie whyt'
An hundred lordes / hadde he with hym there
Al armed saue hir heddes / in al hir gere
fful richely / in alle manere thynges
ffor trusteth wel / þat dukes / Erles / kynges
Were gadred / in this noble compaignye
ffor loue / and for encrees of chiualrye
Aboute this kyng' ther ran on euery part'
fful many a tame leon' and leopart'
¶ And in this wise / thise lordes alle and some
Been on the Sonday / to the Citee come
Aboute pryme / and in the town alight'
¶ This Theseus / this duc' this worthy knyght'
Whan he hadde broght' hem / in to his Citee
And Inned hem / euerich at his degree
He festeth hem / and dooth so gret labour
To esen hem / and doon hem al honour
That yet men wenen / þat no mannes wit'
Of noon estaat' ne koude amenden it/
¶ The Mynstralcye / the seruyce / at the feeste
The grete yiftes / to the meeste and leeste
The ryche array / of Theseus Paleys
Ne who sat first' or last' vp on the deys
What ladyes fairest been / and best daunsynge
Or which of hem / kan daunse best and synge
Ne who moost feelyngly / speketh of loue
What haukes sitten / on the perche aboue
What houndes lyggen / on the floor adown
Of al this / make I now no mencioun
But al theffect' that thynketh me the beste
Now comth the point' and herkneth if yow leste
¶ The Sonday nyght' er day bigan to sprynge
Whan Palamon / the larke herde synge
Al thogh it nere nat day / by houres two
Yet soong the larke / and Palamon right tho
With holy herte / and with an heigh corage

He roos / to wenden on his pilgrymage
Vn to the blisful / Scitherea benygne
I mene Venus / honurable and digne
And in hir hour / he walketh forth a paas [leaf 30]
Vn to the lystes / ther hir temple was
And down he kneleth / and with hu*m*ble cheere
And herte soor / he seyde as ye shal heere
¶ ffaireste of faire / o lady myn Venus
Doghter of Ioue / and spouse to Vulcanus
Thow gladere / of the mount of Cytheron
ffor thilke loue / thow haddest to Adoon
Haue pitee / of my bittre teerys smerte
And taak myn humble prayere at thyn herte
¶ Allas I ne haue no langage to telle
Theffecte . ne the tormentz of myn helle
Myn herte / may myne harmes nat biwreye
I am so confus / þat I kan noght seye
But mercy lady bright' þat knowest wele
My thoght' and seest what harmes þat I feele
Considre al this / and rewe vp on my soore
As wisly / as I shal for euere moore
Emforth my myght' thy trewe seruant be
And holden werre / alwey with chastitee
That make I myn avow / so ye me helpe
I kepe noght' of armes for to yelpe
Ne I ne axe noght / tomorwe / to haue victorie
Ne renoun in this cas / ne veyne glorie
Of prys of armes / blowen vp and down
But I wolde haue / fully possessioun
Of Emelye / and dye in thy seruyse
ffynd thow the manere / how / and in what wyse
I recche nat' but it may bettre be
To haue victorie of hem / or they of me
So þat I haue / my lady in myn armes
ffor thogh so be / þat Mars is god of armes
Youre vertu is so greet' in heuene aboue

That if yow list I shal wel haue my loue
¶ Thy temple / wol I worshipe euere mo
And on thyn Auter / wher I ryde or go
I wol doon sacrifice / and fyres beete
And if ye wol noght so / my lady sweete
Thanne praye I thee / to morwe with a spere
That Arcita / me thurgh the herte bere
Thanne rekke I noght whan I haue lost my lyf [leaf 30, back]
Thogh þat Arcita / wynne hire to his wyf
This is theffect and ende of my prayere
Yif me my loue / thow blisful lady deere
¶ Whan the orison was doon / of Palamon
His sacrifice he dide / and that anon
fful pitously / with alle circumstances
Al telle I nat as now / his obseruances
But at the laste / the Statue of Venus shook
And made a signe / wher by þat he took
That his prayere / accepted was that day
ffor thogh the signe / shewed a delay
Yet wiste he wel / þat graunted was his boone
And with glad herte / he wente hym hoom ful soone
¶ The thridde hour in equal / þat Palamon
Bigan / to Venus temple / for to gon
Vp roos the soone / and vp roos Emelye
And to the temple of Diane / gan hye
Hir maydens / þat she thider with hire ladde
fful redily with hem / the fyr they hadde
Thencens / the clothes / and the remenant al
That to the sacrifice / longen shal
The hornes ful of Mede / as was the gyse
Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrifise
¶ Smokynge the temple / ful of clothes faire
This Emelye / with herte debonaire
Hir body wessh / with water of a welle
But how she dide hir ryte / I dar nat telle
But it be / any thyng in general

And yet' it were a game / to heren al
To hym þat meneth wel / it nere no charge
But it is good / a man be at his large
¶ Hir brighte heer was kembed / vntressed al
A corone / of a grene ook' cerial
Vp on hir heed was set' ful fair and meete
Two fyres / on the Auter gan she beete
And dide hir thynges / as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes / and othere bokes olde
Whan kyndled was the fyr / with pitous cheere
Vn to Diane / she spak / as ye may heere
¶ O chaste goddesse / of the wodes grene [leaf 31]
To whom / bothe heuene / and erthe / and See (l. mare) is seene
Queene of the regne of Pluto / derk and lowe
Goddesse of maydenes / þat myn herte hast knowe
fful many a yeer / and woost what I desire
As keepe me / fro thy vengeance and thyn Ire
That Attheon' / aboghte crewelly
Chaste goddesse / wel wostow þat I
Desire / to been a mayden / al my lyf'
Ne neuere wol I be / no loue / ne wyf'
I am thow woost' yet of thy compaignye
A mayde / and loue huntyng' and venerye
And for to walken / in the wodes wilde
And noght to been a wyf / and be with childe
Noght wol I knowe / compaignye of man
Now help me lady / sith ye may and kan
ffor tho thre formes / þat thow hast in thee
And Palamon / þat hath swich loue to me
And eek Arcite / þat loueth me so soore
This grace I praye thee / with oute moore
As seend[e] loue and pees / bitwix hem two
And fro me / turn' awey / hir hertes so
That al hir hote loue / and hir desir
And al hir bisy torment' and hir fyr
Be queynt' and turned in another place

And if so be / thow wolt noght do me grace
Or if my destynee / be shape so
That I shal nedes / haue oon of hem two
As seend me hym / þat moost desireth me
Bihoold goddesse / of clene chastitee
The bittre teerys / þat on my chekes falle
Syn thow art mayde / and kepere of vs alle
My maydenhode thow kepe / and wel conserue
And whil I lyue / a mayde I wol thee serue
¶ The fyres brenne / vp on the Auter cleere
Whil Emelie / is thus in hir prayere
But sodeynly / she seigh a sighte queynte
ffor right anon / oon of the fyres queynte
And quyked agayn / and after that anon
That oother fyr was queynt and al agon
And as it queynte / it made a whistlynge [leaf 31, back]
As doon thise weete brondes / in hir brennynge
And at the brondes ende / out ran anoon
As it were / blody dropes many oon
ffor which / so soore agast was Emelye
That she was wel neigh mad / and gan to crye
ffor she ne wiste / what it signyfied
But oonly for the feere / thus hath she cryed
And weepe / þat it was pitee for to heere
¶ And ther with al / Diane gan appeere
With bowe in honde / right as an hunteresse
And seyde doghter / stynt thyn heuynesse
Among the goddes hye / it is affermed
And by eterne word / writen and confermed
Thou shalt be wedded / vn to oon of tho
That han for thee / so muche care and wo
But vn to which of hem / I may noght telle
ffare wel / for I ne may no lenger dwelle
The fires / which þat on myn Auter brenne
Shul thee declaren / er þat thow go henne
Thyn auenture of loue / as in this cas

And with that word / the Arwes in the Caas
Of the goddesse / clateren faste and rynge
And forth she wente / and made a vanysshynge
ffor which / this Emelye astoned was
And seyde / what amounteth this allas
I putte me / in thy proteccion
Diane / and in thy disposicion
And hoom she gooth anoon / the nexte weye
This is theffect' ther nys namoore to seye
¶ The nexte houre of Mars / folwynge this
Arcite / vn to the temple walked is
Of fierse Mars / to doon his sacrifise
With alle the rytes / of his payen wise
With pitous herte / and heigh deuocion
Right thus to Mars / he seyde his orison
¶ O stronge god / þat in the regnes colde
Of Trace / honoured art' and lord yholde
And hast in euery regne / and euery lond
Of armes / al the brydel in thyn hond
And hem fortunest' as thee list deuyse [leaf 32]
Accepte of me / my pitous sacrifise
If so be / þat my youthe may disserue
And þat my myght' be worthy for to serue
Thy godhede / þat I may be oon of thyne
Thanne praye I thee / to rewe vp on my pyne
ffor thilke peyne / and thilke hote fyr
In which / thow whilom brendest for desir
Whan þat thow vsedest the beautee
Of faire yonge / fresshe Venus free
And haddest hire in armes at thy wille
Al though thee ones / on a tyme mysfille
Whan Vulcanus / hadde caught thee in his laas
And foond thee lyggyng' by his wyf allas
ffor thilke sorwe / þat was in thyn herte
Haue routhe as wel / vp on my peynes smerte
I am yong / and vnkonnyng' as thow woost/

And as I trowe / with loue offended moost
That euere was / any lyues creature
ffor she þat dooth me / al this wo endure
Ne reccheth neuere / wher I synke or fleete
And wel I woot er she me mercy heete
I moot with strengthe / wynne hire in the place
And wel I woot with outen help and grace
Of thee / ne may my strengthe noght auaille
Thanne help me lord / tomorwe in my bataille
ffor thilke fyr / þat whilom brende thee
As wel as thilke fyr / now brenneth me
And do þat I tomorwe / may haue victorie
Myn be the trauaille / and thyn be the glorie
Thy souereyn temple / wol I moost honouren
Of any place / and alwey moost labouren
In thy plesaunce / and in thy craftes stronge
And in thy temple / I wol my baner honge
And alle the armes / of my compaignye
And euere mo / vn til þat day I dye
Eterne fyr / I wol bifore thee fynde
And eek to this auow / I wol me bynde
My berd / myn heer / þat hangeth long adown
That neuere yet ne felte offensioun
Of Rasour / nor of Shere / I wol thee yiue [leaf 32, back]
And been thy trewe seruant whil I lyue
Now lord haue routhe / vp on my sorwes soore
Yif me the victorie / I axe thee namoore
¶ The prayere stynt of Arcita the stronge
The rynges / on the temple dore þat honge
And eek the dores / clatereden ful faste
Of which Arcita / som what hym agaste
The fires brende / vp on the Auter brighte
That it gan al the temple for to lighte
A swete smel / anoon the ground vp yaf
And Arcita / anoon his hand vp haf
And moore encens / in to the fyr he caste

With othere rytes mo / and at the laste
¶ The statue of Mars / bigan his hauberk' rynge
And with that sown / he herde a murmurynge
fful lowe and dym / and seyde thus / Victorie
ffor which / he yaf to Mars / honour and glorie
¶ And thus with ioye / and hope / wel to fare
Arcite anoon / vn to his In is fare
As fayn as fowel / is of the brighte sonne
¶ And right anoon / swich stryf ther is bigonne
ffor thilke grauntyng' in the heuene aboue
Bitwixe Venus / the goddesse of loue
And Mars / the sterne god armipotente
That Iuppiter / was bisy it to stente
Til þat the pale / Saturnus the colde
That knew so manye / of auentures olde
ffoond in his olde experience / an art'
That he ful soone / hath plesed euery part'
As sooth is seyd / elde hath greet auantage
In elde / is bothe wisdom and vsage
Men may the olde atrenne and nat atrede
Saturne anoon / to stynten stryf and drede
Al be it / þat it is agayn his kynde
Of al this stryf' he kan remedie fynde
¶ My deere doghter Venus / quod Saturne
My cours / that hath so wyde for to turne
Hath moore power / than woot any man
Myn is the drenchyng' in the See so wan
Myn is the prison / in the derke cote [leaf 33]
Myn is the stranglyng' and hangyng by the throte
The murmur / and the cherles rebellynge
The groynyng' and the pryuee empoysonynge
I do vengeance / and pleyn correccion)
Whil I dwelle / in the signe of the leon)
Myn is the ruyne / of the heighe halles
The fallyng' of the toures / and of the walles
Vp on the Mynour / or the Carpenter

I slow Sampson / shakyng the piler
And myne be / the maladies colde
The derke tresons / and the castes olde
My lookyng' is the fader of pestilence
Now weep namoore / I shal doon diligence
That Palamon / that is thyn owene knyght'
Shal haue his lady / as thow hast hym hight'
Thogh Mars shal helpe his knyght' yet nathelees
Bitwixe yow / ther moot be som tyme pees
Al be ye noght' of o complexion'
That causeth al day / swich diuision'
I am thyn Aiel / redy at thy wille
Weepe now namoore / I wol thy lust fulfille
¶ Now wol I stynten / of the goddes aboue
Of Mars / and of Venus / goddesse of loue
And telle yow / as pleynly as I kan
The grete effect'. for which þat I bigan

[*No gap in the MS.*]

¶ Greet was the feeste / in Atthenes that day
And eek the lusty seson' / of that May
Made euery wight' to been in swich plesaunce
That al that monday / Iusten they and daunce
And spenden it' in Venus heigh seruyse
And by the cause / þat they sholde ryse
Erly / for to seen the grete sight'
Vn to hir reste / wente they at nyght'
And on the morwe / whan the day gan sprynge
Of hors and harneys / noyse and claterynge
Ther was in hostelryes / al aboute
And to the paleys / rood ther many a route
Of lordes / vp on steedes and palfreys
Ther maistow seen / deuysynge of harneys
So vnkouth / and so ryche / and wroght so weel [leaf 33, back]
Of Goldsmythrye / of Broudyng' and of steel

The sheldes brighte / testers / and trappures
Goldhewen helmes / hauberkes / cote armures
Lordes in parementz / on hir coursers
Knyghtes of retenue / and eek Squyers
Nailynge the speres / and the helmes bokelynge
Gyggynge of sheeldes / with layners lasynge
Ther as nede is / they were no thyng ydel
The fomy steedes / on the golden brydel
Gnawynge / and faste the Armurers also
With fyle and hamer / prykyng to and fro
Yemen on foote / and communes many oon
With shorte staues / thikke as they may goon
Pipes / trompes / Nakers / Claryounes
That in the bataille / blowen blody sownes
The paleys ful of peples / vp and down
Heer thre / ther ten / holdynge hir questioun
Deuynynge / of thise Thebans knyghtes two
Somme seyde thus / somme seyden it shal be so
Somme helden with hym / with the blake berd
Somme with the balled / somme with the thikke herd
Somme seyde / he looked grym / and he wolde fighte
He hath a Sparth / of .xx. pound of wighte
Thus was the halle / ful of deuynynge
Longe after / þat the sonne gan to sprynge
¶ The grete Theseus / þat of his sleepe awaked
With mynstralcye / and noyse þat was maked
Held yet the chambres / of his paleys ryche
Til þat the Theban knyghtes / bothe yliche
Honoured /. weren in to the paleys fet
¶ Duc Theseus / is at a wyndow set
Arrayed / right as he weere a god in Trone
The peple preeseth / thiderward ful soone
Hym for to seen / and doon heigh reuerence
And eek / to herkne his heste / and his sentence
¶ An heraud on a Scaffold / made an .oo.
Til al the noyse / of the peple was ydo

And whan he say the peple / of noyse al stille
Thus shewed he / the myghty dukes wille
¶ The lord hath / of his heighe discrecion [leaf 34]
Considred / þat it were destruccion
To gentil blood / to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille / now in this emprise
Wher fore / to shapen / þat they shal noght dye
He wole / his firste purpos modifie
¶ No man ther fore / vp on peyne / of los of lyf
No manere shot ne polax / ne short knyf
In to the lystes sende / or thider brynge
Ne short swerd for to stoke / with point bitynge
No man ne drawe / ne bere it by his syde
Ne no man / shal vn to his felawe ryde
But o cours / with a sharp ygrounde spere
ffoyne if hym list on foote / hym self to were
And he þat is at meschief / shal be take
And noght slayn / but be broght vn to the stake
That shal been ordeyned / on eyther syde
But thider he shal bi force / and ther abyde
And if so falle / the Chiefteyn be take
On outher syde / or ellis sleen his make
No lenger / shal the tourneying laste
God spede yow / go forth and ley on faste
With long swerd / and *with* mace / fighteth your fille
Go now youre wey / this is the lordes wille
¶ The voys of peple / touched the heuene
So loude cryde they / with loude steuene
God saue swich a lord / that is so good
He wilneth / no destruccion of blood
¶ Vp goon the trompes / and the melodye
And to the lystes / ryt the compaignye
By ordinance / thurgh out the Citee large
Hanged with clooth of gold / and noght *with* sarge
¶ fful lyk a lord / this noble duc gan ryde
Thise two Thebans / vp on eyther syde

And after rood the queene / and Emelye
And after that' another compaignye
Of oon and oother / after hire degree
And thus they passen / thurgh out the Citee
And to the lystes / coome they bityme
It nas nat of the day / yet fully pryme
¶ Whan set was Theseus / ful ryche and hye [leaf 31, back]
Ypolita the queene / and Emelye
And othere ladyes / in degrees aboute
Vn to the setes / preeseth al the route
And westward / thrugh the gates vnder Marte
Arcite / and eek the hundred of his parte
With baner reed / is entred right anon
¶ And in that selus moment' Palamon
Is vnder Venus / Estward in the place
With baner whit' / and hardy cheere and face
In al the world / to seken vp and down
So euene / with outen variacioun
Ther nere / swiche compaignyes tweye
ffor ther was noon so wys / þat koude seye
That any hadde / of oother auantage
Of worthynesse / ne of estaat ne age
So euene / were they chosen for to gesse
And in two renges / faire they hem dresse
¶ Whan þat hir names / rad were euerichon
That in hir nombre / gyle were ther noon
Tho were the gates shet' and cryd was loude
Do now youre deuoir / yonge knyghtes proude
¶ The heraudes / lefte hir prikyng' vp and down
Now ryngen trompes loude / and Clarioun
Ther is namoore to seyn / but west' and Est'
In goon the speres / ful sadly in the arest'
In gooth the sharpe spore / in to the syde
Ther seen men / who kan Iuste / and who kan ryde
Ther shyueren shaftes / vp on sheeldes thikke
He feeleth / thurgh the herte spoon the prykke

l. sub Marte

Vp spryngeth speres / twenty foot on highte
Out goon the swerdes / as the siluer brighte
The helmes they tohewen / and to-shrede
Out brest the blood / with sterne stremys rede
With myghty maces / the bones they tobreste
He thurgh the thikkest' of the throng gan threste
Ther stomblen steedes stronge / and doun gooth al
He rolleth vnder foot' as dooth a bal
He foyneth on his feet' with his tronchoun
And he hym hurteth / with his hors adoun
He thurgh the body is hurt' and sithen ytake [leaf 35]
Maugree his heed / and broght vn to the Stake
As forward was / right there he moste abyde
Another / lad is on that oother syde
¶ And som tyme / dooth hem Theseus to reste
Hem to refresshe / and drynken if hem leste
fful ofte a-day / haue thise Thebans two
Togydre ymet' and wroght his felawe wo
Vnhorsed hath ech oother / of hem tweye
Ther nas no tygre / in the vale of Galgopheye
Whan þat hir whelp is stole / whan it is lyte
So cruel on the hunte / as is Arcite
ffor Ialous herte / vp on this Palamon
Ne in Belmarye / ther nys so fel leon
That hunted is / or for his hunger wood
Ne of his praye / desireth so the blood
As Palamon / to sleen his foo Arcite
The Ialous strokes / on hir helmes byte
Out renneth blood / on bothe hir sydes rede
¶ Som tyme an ende ther is / of euery dede
ffor er the sonne / vn to the reste wente
The stronge kyng Emetrius / gan hente
This Palamon / as he faught with Arcite
And made his swerd / depe in his flessh to byte
And by the force of twenty / is he take
Vnyolden / and ydrawen to the stake

And in the rescous / of this Palamon
The stronge kyng lygurge / is born adoun
And kyng Emetrius / for al his strengthe
Is born out of his sadel / a swerdes lengthe
So hitte hym Palamon / er he were take
But al for noght' he was broght to the stake
His hardy herte / myghte hym helpe naught'
He moste abyde / whan þat he was caught'
By force / and eek by composicion
¶ Who sorweth now / but woful Palamon
That moot namoore / goon agayn to fighte
And whan þat Theseus / hadde seen this sighte
Vn to the folk' / that foghten thus echon
He cryde / hoo namoore / for it is doon
I wol be trewe Iuge / and nat partye [leaf 35, back]
Arcite of Thebes / shal haue Emelye
That by his fortune / hath hire faire ywonne
Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne
ffor ioye of this / so loude and heigh with alle
It semed / þat the lystes sholde falle
¶ What kan now faire Venus / doon aboue
What seith she now / what dooth this queene of loue
But wepeth so / for wantyng of hir wille
Til þat hir teerys / in the lystes fille
She seyde / I am ashamed doutelees
¶ Saturnus seyde / doghter hoold thy pees
Mars hath his wyl / his knyght' hath al his boone
And by myn heed / thow shalt been esed soone
¶ The trompours / with the loude Mynstralcye
The heraudes / þat ful loude yelle and crye
Been in hir wele / for ioye of daun Arcite
But herkneth me / and stynteth noyse a lite
Which a myracle / ther bifel anon
¶ This fierse Arcite / hath of his helm ydon
And on a Courser / for to shewe his face
He priketh / endelong' the large place

Lookyng vpward / vp on this Emelye
And she agayn / hym caste a freendly eye
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
And she was al his cheere / as in his herte
Out of the ground / a furye Infernal sterte
ffrom Pluto sent' at requeste of Saturne
ffor which his hors / for feere gan to turne
And leep asyde / and foundred as he leepe
And er þat Arcite / may taken keepe
He pighte hym / on the pomel of his heed
That in the place / he lay as he were deed
His brest to brosten / with his Sadel bowe
As blak he lay / as any col / or crowe
So was the blood / yronnen in his face
Anon he was yborn out of the place
With hertē soor / to Theseus Paleys
Tho was he coruen / out of his harneys
And in a bed ybrought' ful faire and blyue
ffor he was yet' in memorie and alyue
And alwey cryinge / after Emelye [leaf 36]
¶ Duc Theseus / with al his compaignye
Is comen hoom / to Atthenes his Citee
With alle blisse / and greet solempnytee
Al be it' þat this auenture was falle
He nolde nought' disconforten hem alle
¶ Men seyde eek' Arcite / shal nat dye
He shal been heelyd / of his maladye
And of another thyng / they were as fayn
That of hem alle / was ther noon yslayn
Al were they soore yhurt' and namely oon
That with a Spere / was thirled the brest' boon
¶ To oothere woundes / and to broken armes
Somme hadden salues / and somme hadden charmes
ffermacyes of herbes and eek saue
They dronken / for they wolde hir lymes haue

ffor which this noble duc / as he wel kan
Conforteth / and honoureth euery man
And made reuel / al the longe nyght
Vn to the straunge lordes / as was right
¶ Ne ther was holden to disconfitynge
But as a Iustes / or a tourneyinge
ffor soothly / there was no disconfiture
ffor fallyng. nys nat but an auenture
Ne to been had by force vn to the stake
Vnyolden / and with twenty knyghtes take
A persone allone / with outen mo
And haryed forth / by arm / foot / and to
And eek his steede / dryuen forth with staues
With footmen / bothe yemen and eek knaues
It nas arretted hym / no vileynye
Ther may no man / clepe it cowardye
¶ ffor which anoon / Duc Theseus leet crye
To stynten / al rancour and enuye
The gre / as wel of oo syde as of oother
And eyther syde ylyk as otheres brother
And yaf hem yiftes / after hir degree
And fully heeld a feeste / dayes three
And conueyed / the kynges worthily
Out of his toun / a iournee largely
And hoom wente euery man / the right̃e way [leaf 36, back]
Ther was namoore / but fare wel haue good day
Of this bataille / I wol namoore endite
But speke of Palamon / and of Arcite [*A break in the MS. with*] ¶ Explicit secunda pars
Swelleth the brest of Arcite / and the soore ¶ Incipit pars tercia & vltima
Encreese that his herte / moore and moore
The clothered blood / for any lechecraft
Corrupteth / and is in his bouk / ylaft
That neyther veyne blood / ne ventusynge
Ne drynke of herbes / may been his helpynge
The vertu expulsyf / or animal
ffro thilke vertu / clepyd natural

·Ne may the venym / voyden ne expelle
The pipes of his longes / gan to swelle
And euery lacerte / in his brest adown
Is shent' with venym and corrupcioun
Hym gayneth neither / for to gete his lyf
Vomyt vpward / ne downward laxatyf'
Al is to brosten / thilke regioun
Nature / hath no dominacioun
And certeinly / ther nature wol nat werche
ffare wel Phisyk'. go ber the man to cherche
This al and som / þat Arcita moot dye
ffor which / he sendeth after Emelye
And Palamon / þat was his cosyn deere
Thanne seyde he thus / as ye shal after heere
¶ Nat may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare a point' of alle my sorwes smerte
To yow my' lady / þat I loue moost'
But I byquethe / the seruice of my goost'
To yow / abouen euery creature
Syn þat my lyf / may no lenger dure
Allas the wo / allas the peynes stronge
That I for yow haue suffred / and so longe
Allas the deeth / allas myn Emelye [leaf 37]
Allas / departyng' of oure compaignye
Allas myn hertes queene / allas my wif
Myn hertes lady / endere of my lyf
What is this world / what axeth men to haue
Now with his loue / now in his colde graue
[. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
¶ I haue heer / with my cosyn Palamon
Had stryf and rancour / many a day gon
ffor loue of yow / and for my Ialousye
And Iuppiter / so wys my soule gye

To speken / of a seruaunt *pro*prely
With circumstaunces alle / trewely
That is to seyn / trouthe / honour / knyghthede
Wisdom / humblesse / estaat / and heigh kynrede
ffredom / and al / that longeth to that art'
So Iuppiter / haue of my soule part'
As in this world / right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to been loued / as Palamon
That serueth yow / and wol doon al his lyf'
And if þat euere / ye shal been a wyf'
fforyet nat Palamon / the gentil man
And with that word / his speche faille gan
ffor from his feet' vp to his brest was come
The coold of deeth / þat hadde hym ouercome
And yet moore ouer / for in his armes two
The vital strengthe / is lost' and al ago
Oonly the Intellect' with oute moore
That dwelled in his herte / syk and soore
Gan faillen / whan the herte felte deeth
Dusked hise eyen two / and fayled breeth
But on his lady / yet caste he his eye
His laste word / was mercy Emelye
His spirit chaunged hous / and wente ther
As I cam neuere / I kan nat tellen wher
Therfore I stynte / I nam no dyuynystre
Of soules / fynde I nat in this Registre
Ne me ne lyst' thilke opynyons to telle
Of hem / thogh þat they writen wher they dwelle
Arcite is coold / ther Mars his soule gye
Now wol I speken / forth of Emelye
¶ Shrighte Emelye / and howleth Palamon [leaf 37, back]
And Theseus / his suster took anon
Swownynge / and baar hire fro the corps away
What helpeth it' to tarien forth the day
To tellen how she weepe / bothe eue and morwe
ffor in swich caas / wommen haue swich sorwe

Whan þat hir housbondes / been from hem ago
That for the moore part' they sorwen so
Or ellis fallen / in swich a maladye
That at the laste / certeinly they dye
¶ Infinite / been the sorwes and the teerys
Of olde folk'. and folk of tendre yeerys
In all the town for the deeth of this Theban
ffor hym ther wepeth bothe child a[nd] man
So greet wepyng' was ther noon certayn
Whan Ector was broght' al fressh̄ yslayn
To Troye / allas the pitee þat was ther
Cracchynge of chekes / rentyng eek of heer
Why woldestow be deed / thise wommen crye
And haddest gold ynow / and Emelye
¶ No man / myghte gladen Theseus
Sauyng' his olde fader Egeus
That knew / this worldes transmutacioun
As he hadde seyn it chaungen / bothe vp and down
Ioye after wo / and wo after gladnesse
And shewed hem / ensample and lyknesse
¶ Right as ther deyed neuere man / quod he Argumentum.
That he ne lyued in erthe / in som degree
Right so / ther lyued neuere man he seyde
In al this world / þat som tyme he ne deyde
This world nys but a thurghfare / ful of wo
And we been pilgrymes / passynge to and fro
Deeth is an ende / of euery worldly soore
And ouer al this / yet seyde he muchel moore
To this effect' ful wysly / to enhorte
The peple / that they sholde hem̄ reconforte
¶ Duc Theseus / with al his bisy cure
Caste now / wher that the sepulture
Of goode Arcite / may best ymaked be
And eek moost honurable / in his degree
And at the laste / he took conclusioun [leaf 38]
That ther / as first' Arcite and Palamon

Hadden for loue / the bataille hem bitwene
That in the selue groue / swoote and grene
Ther as he hadde / hise amorouse desires
His compleinte / and for loue his hote fyres
He wolde make a fyr / in which the office
ffuneral / he myghte al acomplice
And leet anoon comaunde / to hakke and hewe
The okes olde / and leyen hem on a rewe
In colpons / wel arrayed for to brenne
Hise officers / with swifte feet they renne
And ryde anoon / at his comandement
And after this / Theseus hath ysent
After a Beere / and it al ouerspradde
With clooth of gold / the richeste þat he hadde
And of the same suyte / he cladde Arcite
Vp on his handes / his gloues white
Eek on his heed / a coroune of laurer greene
And in his hand / a swerd ful bright and keene
He leyde hym bare the visage / on the beere
Ther with he weepe / þat pitee was to heere
And for the peple / sholde seen hym alle
Whan it was day / he broghte hym to the halle
That roreth / of the cryyng and the sown
Tho cam / this woful Theban Palamon
With flotry berd / and ruggy asshy heerys
In clothes blake / ydropped al with teerys
And passyng othere / of wepyng Emelye
The rufulleste / of al the compaignye
In as muche / as the seruyce sholde be
The moore noble / and ryche in his degree
Duc Theseus / leet forth thre steedes brynge
That trapped weren in steel al gliterynge
And couered with the armes / of daun Arcite
Vp on thise steedes / grete and whyte
Ther seten folk / of which oon baar his sheeld
Another his spere / vp on his hondes heeld

The thridde bar with hym / his bowe Turkeys
Of brend gold / was the caas / and eek the harneys
And ryden forth a paas / with sorweful cheere [leaf 33, back]
Toward the groue / as ye shul after heere
The nobleste of the Grekys / þat ther were
Vp on hir shuldres / carieden the beere
With slak[e] paas / and eyen rede and weete
Thurgh out the Citee / by the maister streete
That sprad was al with blak' and wonder hye
Right of the same / is the strete ywrye
Vp on the right hand / wente olde Egeus
And on that oother syde / Duc' Theseus
With vessels in hir hand / of gold ful fyn
As ful of hony / melk / and blood and wyn
Eek Palamon / with ful greet compaignye
And after that / cam woful Emelye
With fyr in hande / as was that tyme the gyse
To do the office / of funeral seruyse
¶ Heigh labour / and greet apparaillynge
Was at the seruyce / and the fyr makynge
That with his grene tope / the heuene raughte
And twenty fadme of brede / the armes straughte
This is to seyn / the bowes / were so brode
Of stree first' ther was leyd many a lode
But how the fyr was maked vp on highte
Ne eek the names / how the trees highte
As ook / ffyrre / Birch / Asp / Alder / holm / popler
Wylow / Elm / Plane / Assh / Box / Chestayn / lynde / laurer
Mapul / Thorn / Beech / hasyl / Ew / Whippultree
How they were feld / shal nat been told for me
Ne how the goddes / ronnen vp and doun
Desherited / of hir habitacioun
In which they woneden / in reste and pees
Nymphes / ffawnes / and Amadrides
Ne how the beestes / and the bryddes alle
ffledden / for fered / whan the wode was falle

Ne how the ground / agast was of the lyght
That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright
Ne how the fyr / was couched first with stree
And thanne with drye stikkes / clouen a three
And thanne with grene wode / and spicerye
And thanne with clooth of gold / and with perrye
And gerlandes hangynge / ful of many a flour [leaf 39]
The Mirre / thencens / with al so greet sauour
Ne how Arcite / lay among al this
Ne what richesse / aboute the body is
Ne how that Emelye / as was the gyse
Putte in the fyr / of funeral seruyse
Ne how she swowned / whan men made the fyr
Ne what she spak ne what was hir desir
Ne what Iuels / men in the fyr caste
Whan þat the fyr was greet and brente faste
Ne how somme caste hir sheeld / and somme hir spere
And of hir vestimentz / whiche þat they were
And coppes fulle of Milk / and wyn and blood
In to the fyr / þat brente as it were wood
Ne how the Grekys / with An huge route
Thries ryden / al the fyr aboute
Vp on the left hand / with a loud shoutynge
And thries / with hir speres claterynge
And thries / how the ladyes gonne crye
And how þat lad / was homward Emelye
Ne how Arcite / is brent to Asshen colde
Ne how that lychwake / was yholde
Al thilke nyght ne how the grekys pleye
The wake pleyes / ne kepe I noght to seye
Who wrastleth best naked / with oille enoynt
Ne who þat baar hym best in no disioynt
I wol nat tellen al / how [that] they goon
Hoom til Atthenes / whan the pleye is doon
But shortly to the poynt than wol I wende
And maken / of my longe tale an ende

¶ By *proces* / and by lengthe of certeyn yerys
Al stynt is / the moornynge and the terys
Of Grekys / by oon general assent'
Thanne semed me / ther was a *par*lement'
At Atthenes / vp on a certeyn point' and caas
Among the whiche pointes / y-spoken was
To haue / with certeyn contrees alliance
And haue fully / of Thebans obeisance
ffor which this noble Theseus anon
Leet senden / after gentil Palamon
Vnwist of hym / what was the cause and why [leaf 39, back]
But in his blake clothes / sorwefully
He cam at his comandement / in hye
Tho sente Theseus / for Emelye
¶ Whan they were set' and hust was al the place
And Theseus / abiden hath a space
Er any word / cam from his wise brest/
His eyen sette he ther as was his lest'
And with a sad visage / he siked stille
And after that' right thus he seyde his wille
¶ The firste moeuere / of the cause aboue Nota
Whan he first made / the faire cheyne of loue
Greet was theffect' and heigh was his entente
Wel wiste he why / and what ther of he mente
ffor with that faire cheyne of loue he boond
The fyr / the Eyr / the water / and the loond
In *cer*teyn boundes / þat they may nat flee
That same Prince / and that moeuere quod he
Hath stablicel / in this wrecched world adoun
Certeine dayes / and duracioun
To al / that is engendred / in this place
Ouer the which day / they may nat pace
Al mowe they yet / tho dayes abregge
Ther nedeth / noon auctoritee to allegge
ffor it is proued / by experience
But þat me list' declaren my sentence

Thanne may men wel / by this ordre discerne
That thilke moeuere / stable is and eterne
Wel may men knowe / but it be a fool
That euery part. is diryued from his hool
ffor nature / hath nat taken his bigynnyng
Of no partie / or of cantel of a thyng
But of a thyng. that parfit is and stable
Descendynge so / til it be corrumpable
And ther fore / for his wise purueiaunce
He hath / so wel biset his ordinaunce
That specis of thynges / and progressions
Shullen enduren / by successions
And noght eterne / with outen any lye
This maistow vnderstonde / and seen at Iye
¶ Loo the ook / that hath so long a norisshynge [leaf 40]
ffro the tyme / that it first gynneth sprynge
And hath so long a lyf / as ye may see
Yet at the laste / wasted is the tree
¶ Considreth eek / how þat the harde stoon
Vnder oure foot on which we ryde and goon
It wasteth / as it lyth by the weye
The brode Ryuer / som tyme wexeth dreye
The grete townes / se we wane and wende
Thanne se ye / þat al this thyng hath ende
Of man and womman / se we wel also
That nedeth / in oon of thise termes two
This is to seyn / in youthe / or ellis age
He moot be deed / the kyng as shal a page
Som in his bed / som in the depe see
Som in the large feeld / as ye may se
Ther helpeth noght al gooth that ilke weye
Thanne may I seyn / þat al this thyng moot deye
What maketh this? but Iuppiter the kyng
That is Prince / and cause of alle thyng
Conuertyng / al vn to his propre welle
ffrom which he is diryued sooth to telle

And heer agayns / no creature on lyue
Of no degree / auailleth for to stryue
¶ Thanne is it wisdom / as it thynketh me
To makon *ver*tu / of necessitee
And take it wel / þat we may nat eschue
And nameliche / that to vs alle is due
And who so gruccheth ought he dooth folye
And rebel is / to hym þat al may gye
And certeinly / a man hath moost honour
To dyen / in his excellence and flour
Whan he is siker / of his goode name
Thanne hath he doon / his freend ne hym no shame
And gladder oghte / his freend been of his deeth
Whan with honour / yolden is vp his breeth
Than whan his name / apalled is for age
ffor al forgeten is his vasselage
Thanne is it best as for a worthy fame
To dyen / whan he is best of name
¶ The contrarie of al this / is wilfulnesse
Why grucchen we / why haue we heuynesse
That goode Arcite / of chiualrie flour [leaf 40, back]
Departed is / with duetee / and with honour
Out of this foule prison / of this lyf
Why gruccheth heere / his cosyn and his wyf/
Of his welfare / þat loueth hem so weel
Kan he hem thank / nay good woot neuer a deel
That bothe his soule / and eek hem self offende
And yet they mowe / hir lustes nat amende
¶ What may I conclude / of this longe serye
But after wo / I rede vs to be merye
And thanken Iuppiter / of al his grace
And er we / departen from this place
I rede we make / of sorwes two
O *parfit* Ioye / lastynge euere mo
And loketh now / wher moost sorwe is her Inne
Ther wol I first amenden and bigynne

¶ Suster quod he / this is my ful assent
With al thauys / heer of my *par*lement
That gentil Palamon / youre owene knyght
That serueth yow / with wyl and herte myght
And euere hath doon / syn ye first hym knewe
That ye shal of youre grace vp on hym rewe
And taken hym / for housbond and for lord
Leen me youre hond / for this is oure acord
Lat se now / of youre wo*m*manly pitee
He is / a kynges brother sone pardee
And thogh he were / a poure Bachiler
Syn he hath serued yow / so many a yeer
And had for yow / so greet adu*er*sitee
It moste been considred / leueth me
ffor gentil mercy / oghte to passen right
¶ Thanne seyde he thus / to Palamon the knyght
I trowe / ther nedeth litel sermonyng
To make yow / assente to this thyng
Com neer / and taketh youre lady by the hond
Bitwixe hem / was maad anon the bond
That highte matrymoigne / or mariage
By al the conseil / and the Baronage
And thus / with alle blisse / and melodye
Hath Palamon / ywedded Emelye
And god / that al this world hath wroght [leaf 41]
Sende hym his loue / that hath it deere aboght
ffor now is Palamon / in alle wele
Lyuynge in blisse / in richesse / and in heele
And Emelye / hym loueth so tendrely
And he / hir serueth so gentilly
That was ther no word hem bitweene
Of Ialousie / or any oother teene
Thus endeth Palamon / and Emelye
And god saue / al this faire compaignye Amen ☙

¶ Here is ended the Knyghtes tale ☙

¶ The prologe of the Millères tale &

WHan that the Knyght hadde thus his tale ytoold
In al the compaignie / nas ther yong ne oold
That he ne seyde / it was a noble Storie
And worthy / for to drawen to memorie
And namely / the gentils euerichon
¶ Oure hoost lough / and swoor so moot I gon
This gooth aright vnbokeled is the male
Lat se now / who shal telle anothre tale
ffor trewely / the game is wel bigonne
Now telleth ye sire Mönk / if þat ye konne
Som what / to quite with the knyghtes tale
¶ The Millere / that for-dronken was a pale
So that vnnethe / vp on his hors he sat
He nolde aualen / neither hood ne hat
Ne abiden no man / for his curteisye
But in Pilates voys / he gan to crye
And swoor by armes / and by blood and bones
I kan a noble tale / for the nones
With which / I wol now quite the knyghtes tale
¶ Oure Hoost saugh / þat he was dronke of ale
¶ And seyde / abyde Robyn leeue brother [leaf 41, back]
Som bettre man / shal telle vs first another
Abyde / and lat vs werken thriftily
¶ By goddes soule quod he / that wol nat I
ffor I wol speke / or ellis go my wey
¶ Oure Hoost answerde / tel on a deuele wey
Thow art a fool / thy wit is ouercome
¶ Now herkneth quod the Millere / alle and some
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke / I knowe it by my soun
And therfore / if þat I mysspeke / or seye
Wite it / the ale of Southwerk I preye

ffor I wol telle / a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a Carpenter / and of his wyf
How þat a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe
¶ The Reue answerde / and seyde stynt thy clappe
Lat be / thy lewed dronken harlotrye
It is a synne / and eek a greet folye
To apeyren any man / or hym diffame
And eek to bryngen wyues / in swich fame
Thow mayst ynow / of othere thynges seyn
¶ This dronken Millere / spak ful soone ageyn
And seyde / leeue brother Osewold
Who hath no wyf / he is no Cokewold
But I seye nat ther-fore / þat thow art oon
Ther been ful goode wyues many oon
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Why artow angry / wit my tale now
I haue a wyf pardee / as wel as thow
Yet nolde I / for the oxen in my plough
Take vp on me / moore than ynough
As demen of my self / þat I were oon
I wol bileeue wel / þat I am noon
An housbonde / shal noght been Inquisityf/
Of goddes pryuetee / nor of his wyf
So he may fynde / goddes foyson there
Of the remenant nedeth noght enquere
¶ What sholde I moore seyn / but this Millere
He nolde his wordes / for no man forbere
But tolde his cherles tale / in his manere
Me athynketh / that I shal reherce it heere
And ther-fore / euery gentil wight I preye [leaf 42]
Demeth noght for goddes loue / þat I seye
Of yuel entente / but for I moot reherse
Hir tales alle / be they bet or werse
Or ellis falsen / som of my matere
And ther-fore / who so list it noght yhere

Turne ouer the leef / and chese another tale
ffor he shal fynde ynowe / grete and smale
Of storial thyng' that toucheth gentilesse
And eek moralitee / and holynesse
Blameth noght me / if þat ye chese amys
The Millere is a cherl / ye knowe wel this
So was the Reue eek' and othere mo
And harlotrye / they tolden bothe two
Auyseth yow / and put me out of blame
And eek' men shal noght' maken ernest of game

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth the Millerys tale ☙

Whilom ther was dwellyng at Oxenford
A riche gnof' that gestes heeld to bord'
And of his craft' he was a Carpenter
With hym ther was dwellynge a poure Scoler
Hadde lerned art' but al his fantasie
Was turned / for to leere Astrologie
And koude / a certeyn of conclusions
To demen / by interrogacions
If þat men axed hym / in certein houres
Whan þat men sholde haue droghte / or ellis shoures
Or if men axed hym / what shal bifalle
Of euery thyng / I may nat rekene hem alle
¶ This clerk / was clepyd hende Nicholas
Of derne loue he koude / and of solas
And ther-to he was sleigh / and ful pryuee
And lyk a mayde meke / for to see
A chambre hadde he / in that hostelrie
Allone / with-outen any compaignye
fful fetisly dight / with herbes swoote
And he hym self' as sweete as is the roote
Of lycorys / or any Cetuale [leaf 42, back]
His Almageste / and bookes grete and smale
His Astrelabye / longynge for his Art'
His Augrym stones / layen faire a part'
On shelues couched / at his beddes heed
His presse / ycouered with a ffaldyng reed
And al aboue / ther lay a gay Sautrye
On which / he made a nyghtes melodye
So swetely / þat al the chambre roong'
And Angelus ad virginem / he soong'
And after that' he soong the kynges note
ffol often blissed was / his murye throte

And thus this swete clerk / his tyme spente
After his freendes fyndyng' and his rente
¶ This Carpenter / hadde wedded newe a wyf
Which þat he louede / moore than his lyf
Of .xviij. yeer / she was of age
Ialous he was / and heeld hire narwe in Cage
ffor she was wilde and yong / and he was old
And demed hym self / been lyk a Cokewold
He knew nat Catoñ / for his wit was rude
That bad / man sholde wedde his similitude
Men sholde wedden / after hir estaat
ffor youthe and Elde / is often at debaat
But sith þat he / was fallen in the snare
He moste endure / as oother folk' his care
¶ ffair was this yonge wyf / and ther with al
As any wesele / hir body gent and smal
A ceynt she werde / barred al of sylk/
A barmclooth / as whit as morne Mylk'
Vp on hir lendes / ful of many a goore
Whit was hir smok' and broyden al bifoore
And eek bihynde / on hir coler aboute
Of col blak silk / with-Inne and eek *with*-oute
The tapes / of hir white voluper
Were of the same sute / of hir coler
Hir filet brood of sylk' and set ful hye
And sikerly / she hadde a likerous Iye
fful smale ypulled / were hir browes two
And tho were bent / and blake as is a slo
She was ful moore / blisful on to see [leaf 43]
Than is the newe / Pereionette tree
And softer / than the wolle is of a wether
And by hir girdel / heeng a purs of lether
Tasseled with silk / and perled with latoun
In al this world / to seken vp and doun
Ther nys no man so wys / þat koude thenche
So gay a Popelote / or swich a wenche

fful brighter was / the shynyng of hir hewe
Than in the Tour / the noble yforged newe
But of hir soong' it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe / sittyng on a Berne
Ther-to / she koude skippe / and make game
As any kyde / or Calf / folwynge his dame
Hir mouth was sweete / as Bragot' or the meeth
Or hoord of Apples / leyd in hey or heeth
Wynsynge she was / as is a ioly Colt'
Loong as a Mast / and vprighte as a bolt'
A brooch she baar / vp on hir loue coler
As brood / as is the boos of a Bokeler
Hir shoes were laced / on hir legges hye
She was a Prymerole / a piggesnye
ffor any lord / to leggen in his bedde
Or yet' for any good yeman to wedde
¶ Now sire and eft sire / so bifel the cas
That on a day / this hende Nicholas
ffil with this yonge wyf / to rage *and* pleye
Whil *þat* hir housbonde / was at Osneye
As clerkes been / ful subtil and ful queynte
And pryuely / he caughte hire by the queynte
And seyde ywys / but if ich haue my wille
ffor derne loue / of thee lemman I spille
And heeld hire harde / by the haunche bones
And seyde lemman / loue me al atones
Or I wol dyen / al so god me saue
And she sproong' as a Colt dooth in the Traue
And with hir heed / she wryed faste awey
She seyde I wol nat kisse thee by my fey
Wy lat be quod ich / lat be Nicholas
Or I wol crye / out harrow and allas
Do wey youre handes / for youre curteisye [leaf 43, back]
¶ This Nicholas / gan mercy for to crye
And spak so faire / and profred hym so faste
That she hir loue / hym graunted atte laste,

And swoor hir ooth / by Seint Thomas of Kent
That she wolde been / at his comaundement
Whan þat she may / hir leyser wel espie
Myn housbonde / is so ful of Ialousie
That but ye waite wel / and been pryuee
I woot right wel / I nam but deed quod she
Ye moste been ful derne / as in this cas
¶ Nay ther of / care thee noght quod Nicholas
A clerc hadde lutherly / biset his while
But if he koude / a Carpenter bigyle
And thus they been acorded and y-sworn
To waite a tyme / as I haue told biforn
Whan Nicholas / hadde doon thus euerydel
And thakked hire / vp on the lendes wel
He kiste hir sweete / and taketh his sautrye
And pleyeth faste / and maketh melodye
¶ Thanne fil it thus / þat to the parissh chirche
Cristes owene werkes / for to wirche
This goode wyf / wente on an haliday
Hir forheed shoon / as bright as any day
So was it wasshen / whan she leet hir werk
¶ Now was ther of that chirche a parissh clerk
The which / þat was yclepid Absolon
Crul was his heer / and as the gold it shoon
And strouted as a ffanne / large and brode
ffol streight and euene / lay his ioly shode
His rode was reed / hise eyen greye as goos
With Poules wyndow / coruen on his shoos
In hoses rede / he wente fetisly
Yclad he was / ful smal and proprely
Al in a kirtel / of a light waget
ffol faire and thikke / been the pointes set [1] [1 set later]
And ther vp on / he hadde a gay surplys
As whit as is the blosme vp on the rys
A murye child he was / so god me saue
Wel koude he laten blood / and clippe and shaue

And maken a chartre of lond / or Aquitaunce [leaf 14]
On twenty manere / koude he trippe and daunce
After the scole / of Oxenford tho
And with his legges / casten to and fro
And pleyen songes / on a smal Rubible
Ther-to he soong som tyme / a loud quynyble
And as wel / koude he pleye on a gyterne
In al the town / nas Brewhous ne Tauerne
That he ne visited / with his solas
Ther any gaylard tappestere was
But sooth to seyn / he was som del squaymous
Of fartyng / and of speche daungerous
¶ This Absolon / þat ioly was and gay
Gooth with a sencer / on the haliday
Sensynge the wyues / of the parisshe faste
And many a louely look / on hem he caste
And namely / on this Carpenters wyf
To looke on hire / hym thoughte a murye lyf
She was so propre and sweete and likerous
I dar wel seyn / if she hadde been a Mous
And he a cat' he wolde hir hente anon
This parisshe clerk' this ioly Absolon
Hath in his herte / swich a loue longynge
That of no wyf / ne took he noon offrynge
ffor curteisye / he seyde he wolde noon
The Moone / whan it was nyght' ful brighte shoon
And Absolon / his gyterne / hath ytake
ffor paramours / he thoghte for to wake
And forth he gooth / iolyf and amorous
Til he cam / to the Carpenters hous
A litel after the cokkes hadde ycrowe
And dressed hym vp / by a shot wyndowe
That was / vp on the Carpenters wal
He syngeth / in his voys / gentil and smal
Now deere lady / if thy wille be
I prey yow / þat ye wol rewe on me

fful wel acordant' to his giternynge
This Carpenter awook' and herde hym synge
And spak' yn to his wyf / and seyde anon
What Alison / herestow noght Absolon
That chaunteth thus / vnder oure boures wal [leaf 44, back]
¶ And she / answerde hir housbonde / ther with al
Yis god woot Iohñ / I here it euerydel
This passeth forth / what wol ye bet than wel
ffro day to day / this ioly Absolon
So woweth hire / þat hym is wo bigon
He waketh al the nyght' and al the day
He kembed his lokkes brode / and made hym gay
He woweth hire by meenes / and brocage
And swoor / he wolde been hir owene page
He syngeth brokkyng' as a nyghtyngale
He sente hir pyment' Meeth / and spiced Ale
And wafres pipyng hoot / out of the gleede
And for she was of towne / he profred meede
ffor som folk / wol be wonnen for richesse
And som for strokes / and som for gentilesse Vnde Ouidius Ictibus Agrestis.
Som tyme to sheye / his lightnesse and maistrye
He pleyeth Herodes / vp on a scaffold hye
But what auailleth hym / as in this cas
She loueth so / this hende Nicholas
That Absolon / may blowe the Bukkes horn
He ne hadde for his labour / but a scorn
And thus she maketh / Absolon hir Ape
And al his ernest / turneth til a Iape
fful sooth is this prouerbe / it is no lye
Men se'th right thus / alwey the neighe slye
Maketh / the ferre leeue to be looth
ffor thogh þat Absolon / be wood or wrooth
By cause / þat he fer was from hir sighte
This neighe Nicholas / stood in his lighte
¶ Now bere thee wel / thow hende Nicholas
ffor Absolon / may waille / and synge allas

¶ And so bifel it' on a Saterday
This Carpenter / was goon til Osenay
And hende Nicholas / and Alison
Acorded been / to this conclusion
That Nicholas / shal shapen hem a wile
This sely Ialous housbonde / to bigile
And if so be / this game wente aright'
She sholde slepen / in his arm al nyght'
ffor this was hir desir / and his also [leaf 45]
And right anoon / with-outen wordes mo
This Nicholas / no lenger wolde tarie
But dooth ful softe / vn to his chambre carie
Bothe mete and drynke / for a day or tweye
And to hir housbonde / bad hir for to seye
If þat he axed / after Nicholas
She sholde seye / she nyste wher he was
Of al that day / she seigh hym nought *with* Iye
She trowed / þat he was in maladye
ffor / for no cry / hir mayde koude hym calle
He nolde answere / for no thyng þat myghte falle
¶ This passeth forth / al thilke Saterday
That Nicholas / stille in his chambre lay
And eet' and sleepe / or dide what hym leste
Til Sonday / þat sonne gooth to reste
¶ This sely Carpenter / hath greet *mervaille*
Of Nicholas / or what thyng myghte hym aille
And seyde / I am adrad / by Seint Thomas
It stondeth nat aright' with Nicholas
God shilde / þat he deyde sodeynly
This world is now / ful tikel sikerly
I seigh to day a corps / born to chirche
That now a monday last' I seigh hym wirche
Go vp quod he / vn to his knaue anoon
Clepe at his dore / or knokke with a stoon
Looke how it is / and tel me boldely
¶ This knaue gooth hym vp / ful sturdily

And at the chambre dore / whil þat he stood
He cryde and knokked / as þat he were wood
What how / what do ye maister Nicholay
How may ye slepen / al the longe day
But al for noght' he herde nat a word
An hole he foond / ful lowe vp on a bord
Ther as the Cat / was wont In for to crepe
And at that hole / he looked In ful depe
And atte laste / he hadde of hym a sighte
¶ This Nicholas / sat euere capyng vp-righte
As he hadde kiked / on the newe moone
Adown he gooth / and tolde his maister soone
In what array / he saw this ilke man [leaf 45, back]
¶ This Carpenter / to blessen hym bigan
And seyde / help vs seinte ffrideswyde
A man woot litel / what hym shal bityde
This man is falle / with his Astromye
In som woodnesse / or in som Agonye
I thoghte ay wel / how þat it sholde be
Men sholde noght knowe / of goddes priuetee
Ye blissed be alwey / a lewed man
That noght' but oonly his bileue kan
So ferde another clerk' with Astromye
He walked in the feeldes / for to prye
Vp on the sterres / what ther sholde bifalle
Til he was / in a Marle pit yfalle
He saw nat that' but yet by Seint Thomas
Me reweth sore / for hende Nicholas
He shal be rated / of his studiyng'
If þat I may / by Ihesus heuene kyng'
Get me a staf / þat I may vnder-spore
Whil þat thow Robyn / heuest vp the dore
He shal out of his studyyng' as I gesse
And to the chambre dore / he gan hym dresse
His knaue / was a strong carl / for the nones
And by the haspe / he haaf it vp atones

In to the floor / the dore fil anoon
This Nicholas / sat ay as stille as stoon
And euere caped vp / in to the Eyr
This Carpenter / wende he were in despeyr
And hente hym / by the sholdres myghtily
And shook hym harde / and cryde spitously
What Nicholay / what how looke adoun
Awake / and thenk on Cristes passioun
I crouche thee / from Elues and fro wightes
Ther-with the nyght spel / seyde he anon rightes
On foure halues / of the hous aboute
And on the thresshfold' / on the dore with-oute
Ihesu crist' and Seint' Benedight'
Blesse this hous / from euery wikked wight'
ffor the nyghtesuerye / the white Pater noster
Where wentestow / seinte Petres suster
And at the laste / this hende Nicholas [leaf 46]
Gan for to sike soore / and seyde allas
Shal al the world / be lost eft soones now
¶ This Carpenter answerde / what seistow
What thenk / on god / as we doon men þat swynke
¶ This Nicholas answerde / fecche me drynke
And after / wol I speke in pryuetee
Of certein thyng / þat toucheth me and thee
I wol telle it / noon oother man certayn
¶ This Carpenter gooth doun / and comth agayn
And broghte of myghty ale / a large quart'
And whan þat eech of hem / hadde dronke his part'
This Nicholas / his dore faste shette
And doun the Carpenter / by hym he sette
And seyde / Iohñ / myn hoost' lief and deere
Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe / swere me heere
That to no wight' thou shalt this conseil wreye
ffor it is cristes conseil / that I seye
And if thou telle it' man thou art forlore
ffor this vengeaunce / thow shalt haue ther fore

That if thow wreye me / thow shalt be wood
¶ Nay Crist forbede it / for his holy blood
Quod tho this sely man / I nam no labbe
And thogh I seye / I nam nat lief to gabbe
Sey what thow wolt' I shal it neuere telle
To child ne wyf / by hym that harwed helle
¶ Now Iohñ quod Nicholas / I wol noght lye
I haue yfounde / in myn Astrologye
As I haue looked / in the moone bright'
That now a monday next' at quarter nyght'
Shal falle a reyn / and that so wilde and wood
That half so greet' was neuere Nowels flood
This world he seyde / in lasse than in an hour
Shal al be dreynt' so hidous is the shour
Thus shal man-kynde drenche / and lese hir lyf
¶ This Carpenter answerde / allas my wyf'
And shal she drenche / allas myn Alisoun
ffor sorwe of this / he fil almoost adoun
And seyde / is ther no remedie in this cas
¶ Why yis for gode / quod hende Nicholas
If thow wolt werken / after loore and reed [leaf 46, back]
Thow mayst noght werken / after thyn owene heed
ffor thus seith Salomon / þat was ful trewe
Werk al by conseil / and thow shalt noght rewe
And if thow werken wolt' by good consayl
I vndertake / with-outen mast' or sayl
Yit shal I saue hire / and thee and me
Hastow nat herd / how saued was Noe
Whan þat oure lord / hadde warned hym biforn
That al the world / with water sholde be lorn
¶ Yis quod this Carpenter / ful yore ago
¶ Hastow nat herd / quod Nicholas also
The sorwe of Noe / with his felaweshipe
Er þat he myghte / gete his wyf to shipe
Hym hadde leuere / I dar wel vndertake
At thilke tyme / than alle hise wetheres blake

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That she hádde had a shipe / hir self allone
And ther-fore / wostow what is best to done
This axeth haste / and of any hastyf thyng
Men may noght preche / or maken tariyng
Anoon go gete vs faste / in to this In
A knedyng trogh / or ellis a kymelyn
ffor eech of vs / but looke þat they be large
In whiche we mowen swymme / as in a barge
And han ther-Inne / vitaille suffisaunt
But for a day / fy on the remenaunt
The water shal aslake / and goon awáy
Aboute pryme / vp on the nexte day
But Robyn may nat wite of this / thy knaue
Ne eek thy mayde Gille / I may nat saue
Axe noght why / for thogh thou axe me
I wol noght tellen goddes pryuetee
Suffiseth thee / but if thy wittes madde
To han as greet a grace / as Noe hadde
Thy wif shal I wel sauen / out of doute
Go now thy wey / and speed thee heer aboute
But whan thou hast / for hire and thee and me
Ygeten vs / thise knedyng tubbes thre
Thanne shaltow hangen hem / in the roof ful hye
That no man / of oure purueiance espye
And whan thow thus hast doon / as I haue seyd [leaf 47]
And hast oure vitaille / faire in hem yleyd
And eek an Ax / to smyte the corde atwo
Whan þat the water cometh / þat we may go
And breke an hole / an heigh vp on the gable
Vn to the gardynward / ouer the stable
That we may frely / passen forth oure wey
Whan þat the grete shour / is goon awey
Thanne shaltow swymme / as murye I vndertake
As dooth the white doke / after his drake
Thanne woltow clepe / how Alison / how Iohñ
Be murye / for the flood wol passe anon

And thou wolt seyn / hail maister Nicholay
Good morwe / I see thee wel / for it is day
And thanne shal we be lordes al oure lyf/
Of al the world / as Noe and his wyf/
But of o thyng / I warne thee ful right
Be wel auysed / on that ilke nyght
That we been entred / in to shippes bord
That noon of vs / ne speke noght a word
Ne clepe ne crye / but been in his prayere
ffor it is / goddes owene heste deere
Thy wyf and thow / mote hange fer atwynne
ffor þat bitwix yow / shal be no synne
Namoore in lookyng / than ther shal in dede
This ordinaunce is seyd / go god thee spede
Tomorwe at nyght whan men been alle aslepe
In to oure knedyng tubbes / wol we crepe
And sitten there / abidyng goddes grace
Go now thy wey / I haue no lenger space
To make of this / no lenger sermonyng
Men seyn thus / seend the wise and sey no thyng
Thow art so wys / it nedeth thee nat teche
Go saue oure lyf and that I thee biseche
¶ This sely Carpenter / gooth forth his wey
fful ofte he seyde / allas and weylaway
And to his wyf / he tolde his priuetee
And she was war / and knew it bet than he
What al this queynte cast was for to seye
But nathelees / she ferde as she wolde deye
And seyde allas / go forth thy wey anon [leaf 47, back]
Help vs to scape / or we been dede echon
I am thy trewe / verray wedded wyf
Go deere spouse / and help to saue oure lyf
¶ Lo which a greet thyng / is affeccion
Men may dyen / of ymaginacion
So depe / may impression be take
This sely Carpenter / bigynneth quake

Hym thynketh verrailiche / þat he may se
Noes flood / come walwyng as the see
To drenchen Alison / his hony deere
He wepeth / waileth / maketh sory cheere
He siketh / with ful many a sory swogh̄
And gooth / and geteth hym a knedyng' trogh̄
And after / a tubbe and a kymelyn
And pryuely / he sente hem to his In
And heeng hem / in the roof in p'iuetee
His owene hand / he made laddres thre
To clymben / by the ronges and the stalkes
Vn to the tubbes / hangyng' in the balkes
And hem vitailed / bothe trogh and tubbe
With breed and chese / and good ale in a Iubbe
Suffisynge right ynogh / as for a day
But er þat he hadde maad / al this array
He sente his knaue and / eek his wenche also
Vp on his nede / to londoñ for to go
And on the monday / whan it drogh to nyght'
He shette his dore / with-outen candel lyght'
And dressed alle thyng' as it sholde be
And shortly / vp they clomben alle thre
They seten stille / wel a furlong way
Now Pater noster / clom seyde Nicholay
And clum quod Ioh̄ñ / and clum seyde Alison
This Carpenter / seyde his deuocion
And stille he sit' and biddeth his prayere
Awaitynge on the reyn / if he it heere
¶ The dede sleepe / for wery bisynesse
ffil on this Carpenter / right as I gesse
Aboute corfew tyme / or litel moore
ffor trauaillyng of his goost' he groneth soore
And eft he routeth / for his heed myslay [leaf 48]
¶ Doun of the laddre / stalketh Nicholay
And Alison / ful softe adoun she spedde
With-outen wordes mo / they goon to bedde

Ther as the Carpenter / is wont to lye
Ther was the reuel / and the melodye
And thus lyth Alisoñ / and Nicholas
In busynesse of myrthe / and in solas
Til that the belle of laudes / gan to rynge
And freres in the chauncel / gonne synge
¶ This parissh clerk' this amorous Absoloñ
That is for loue / alwey so wo bigon
Vp on the monday / was at Osneye
With compaignye / hym to disporte and pleye
And axed vp on caas / a Cloistrer
fful pryuely / after Iohñ the Carpenter
And he drogh hym a part' out of the cherche
And seyde I noot' I saugh hym here noght werche
Sith Saterday / I trowe þat he be went
ffor tymber / ther oure Abbot hath hym sent'
ffor he is wont' for tymber for to go
And dwellen atte graunge / a day or two
Or ellis / he is at his hous certeyn
Where þat he be / I kan noght soothly seyn
¶ This Absolon / ful iolyf was and lyght'
And thoghte / now is tyme to wake al nyght'
ffor sikerly / I saugh hym noght stirynge
Aboute his dore / syn day bigan to sprynge
So mote I thryue / I shal at Cokkes crowe
fful priuely / knokken at hys wyndowe
That stant ful lowe / vp on his boures wal
To Alison / now wol I tellen al
My loue longyng'. for yit I shal nat mysse
That at the leeste wey / I shal hir kisse
Som manere confort' / shal I haue parfay
My mouth hath icched / al this longe day
That is a signe of kissyng' at' the leeste
Al nyght me mette eek / I was at a feeste
Ther-fore I wol go slepe / an houre or tweye
And al the nyght' than wol I wake and pleye

¶ Whan þat the firste cok' hath crowe anon [leaf 48, back]
Vp rist / this ioly louere Absolon
And hym arrayeth gay / at point deuys
But first / he cheweth grayn and likorys
To smellen swete / er he hadde kembd his heer
Vnder his tonge / a trewe loue he beer
ffor ther by / wende he to be gracious
He rometh / to the Carpenters hous
And stille he stant' vnder the shot wyndowe
Vn to his brest' it raughte / it was so lowe
And ofte he cogheth / with a semy sown
What do ye hony comb / swete Alisoun
My faire bryd / my swete cynamone
Awaketh lemman myn / and speketh to me
Wel litel thynken ye / vp on my wo
That for youre loue / I swete ther I go
No wonder is / thogh þat I swelte and swete
I moorne / as dooth a lamb / after the tete
Ywis lemman / I haue swich loue longyng'
That lyk a turtle trewe / is my moornyng'
I may nat ete / namoore than a mayde
¶ Go fro the wyndow / Iakke fool she sayde
As help me god / it wol nat be com pa me
I loue another / and ellis I were to blame
Wel bet than thee / by Ihesu Absolon
Go forth thy wey / or I wol caste a stoon
And lat me slepe / a twenty deuele wey
¶ Allas quod Absolon / and weilawey
That trewe loue / was euere so yuel biset'
Thanne kys me / syn þat it may be no bet'
ffor Ihesus loue / and for the loue of me
¶ Woltow thanne / go thy wey ther-with quod she
¶ Ye certes lemman / quod this Absolon
¶ Thanne make thee redy quod she / I come anon
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
¶ This Absolon / doun sette hym on his knees

And seyde / I am a lord / at alle degrees
ffor after this / I hope ther cometh moore
Lemman thy grace / and swete bryd thyn oore
¶ The wyndow she vndooth / and that in haste
Haue do quod she / com of and speed thee faste
Lest þat oure neghebores / thee espye [leaf 49]
¶ This Absolon / gan wipe his mouth ful drye
Derk was the nyght as pych / or as the cole
And at the wyndow / out she putte hir hole
And Absolon / hym fil no bet ne wers
But with his mouth / he kiste hir naked ers ☞ Nota malum quid
fful sauourly / er he were war of this
Abak he sterte / and thoghte it was amys
ffor wel he wiste / a womman hath no berd
He felte a thyng al rogh / and longe y-herd
And seyde fy allas / what haue I do
¶ Te hee quod she / and clapte the wyndow to
And Absolon / gooth forth a sory paas
¶ A berd / a berd / quod hende Nicholas
By goddes corpus / this gooth faire and wel
¶ This sely Absolon / herde euery del
And on his lippe / he gan for anger byte
And to hym self / he seyde I shal thee quyte
¶ Who rubbeth now / who froteth now his lippes
With dust with sond / with straw / with clooth / with chippes
But Absolon / þat seith ful ofte allas
My soule / bitake vn to Sathanas
But me were leuere / than al this town quod he
Of this despit awreken for to be
Allas quod he / allas I ne hadde ybleynt
His hote loue was coold / and al yqueynt
ffor fro that tyme / þat he hadde kist hir ers
Of paramours / he sette noght a kers
ffor he was heelyd / of his maladye
fful ofte paramours / he gan defye
And weep / as dooth a child þat is ybete
A softe paas / he went ouer the strete

Vn til a smyth / men clepen daun Gerueys
That in his forge / smythed plogh harneys
He sharpeth shaar / and cultour bisily
This Absolon / knokketh al esily
And seyde / vndo Gerueys and that anoon
¶ What who artow^{s}/ it am I Absolon
What Absolon / what Cristes swete tree
Why rise ye so rathe / ey benedicitee
What eyleth yow / som gay gerl / god it woot^{e} [leaf 49, back]
Hath broght yow thus / vp on the viritoot^{e}
By Seinte note / ye woot wel what I mene
¶ This Absolon / ne roghte nat a bene
Of al his pley / no word agayn he yaf^{e}
He hadde moore tow / on his dystaf^{e}
Than Gerueys knew / and seyde freend so deere
That hoote cultour / in the chymenee heere
As lene it me / I haue ther-with to doone
I wol brynge it thee / agayn ful soone
¶ Gerueys answerde / certes were it gold
Or in a poke / nobles al vntold
Thow sholdest haue / as I am trewe Smyth
Ey Cristes foo / what wol ye do ther-with
¶ Ther-of quod Absolon / be as be may
I shal wel telle it thee / another day
And caughte the cultour / by the colde stele
fful softe / out at the dore he gan to stele
And wente / vn to the Carpenters wal
He cogheth first^{e} and knokketh ther with al
Vp on the wyndow / right as he dide er
¶ This Alison answerde / Who is ther^{s}
That knokketh so / I warante it a theef^{e}
¶ Wy nay quod he god woot^{e} my swete lief^{e}
I am thyn Absolon / my derelyng^{e}
Of gold quod he / I haue thee broght a ryng^{e}
My moder yaf it me / so god me saue
fful fyn it is / and ther-to wel ygraue

This wol I yeuen thee / if thow me kisse
¶ This Nicholas / was risen for to pisse
And thoghte / he wolde amenden al the Iape
He sholde kisse his ers / er þat he scape
And vp the wyndow / dide he hastely
And out his ers / he putteth pryuely
Ouer the buttok / to the haunche bon
¶ And ther-with / spak' this clerk' this Absolon
Spek swete herte / I noot noght wher thow art'
This Nicholas / anoon leet fle a fart'
As greet' as it hadde been a thonder dent'
That with the strook' he was almoost yblent'
And he was redy / with his Iren hoot' [leaf 50]
And Nicholas / in the ers he smoot'
Of gooth the skyn / an handbrede aboute
The hoote cultour / brende so his toute
That for the smert' he wende for to dye
As he were wood / for wo he gan to crye
Help water / water / help for goddes herte
¶ This Carpenter / out of his slomber sterte
And herde oon cryen water / as he were wood
And thoghte allas / now cometh Nowelys flood
He sette hym vp / with-oute wordes mo
And with his ax / he smoot the corde atwo
And down gooth al / he foond neither to selle
Ne breed ne ale / til he cam to the Celle
Vp on the floor / and there aswowne he lay
¶ Vp stirte hire / Alison and Nicholay
And cryden out and harrow / in the Strete
The neghebores / bothe smale and grete
In ronnen / for to gauren on this man
That aswowne lay / bothe pale and wan
ffor with the fal / he brosten hadde his arm
But stonde he moste / vn to his owene harm
ffor whan he spak / he was anon bore doun
With hende Nicholas and Alisoun

They tolden euery man / þat he was wood
He was agast so / of Nowelys flood
Thurgh fantasie / þat of his vanytee
He hadde yboght hym / knedyng tubbes thre
And hadde hem hanged / in the roof aboue
And þat he preyde hem / for goddes loue
To sitten in the roof / par compaignye
¶ The folk gan laughen / at his fantasye
In to the roof / they kiken and they cape
And turned al his harm / vn to a Iape
ffor what so / þat this Carpenter answerde
It was for noght / no man his reson herde
With othes grete / he was so sworn adoun
That he was holden wood / in al the toun
ffor euery clerk / anon right heeld with oother
They seyde / the man was wood / my leeue brother
And euery wight / gan laughen at this stryf [leaf 50, back]
Thus swyued / was the Carpenters wyf
ffor al his kepyng / and his Ialousye
And Absolon / hath kist hir nether Iye
And Nicholas / is scalded in the toute
This tale is doon / and god saue al the route

℣ ¶ Here is ended / the Millerys tale.

[*No gap in the MS.*]

¶ The prologe / of the Reues tale

WHan folk hadde laughen / at this nyce cas
Of Absolon / and hende Nicholas
Diuerse folk / diuersely they seyde
But for the moore part' they lowe and pleyde
Ne at his tale I seigh no man hym greue
But it were oonly / Osewold the Reue
By-cause he was / of Carpenters craft'
A litel Ire / is in his herte ylaft'
He gan to grucche / and blamed it a lite
So the ik quod he / ful wel koude I thee quyte
With blerynge of a proud Millerys Iye
If þat me liste / speke of rybaudye
But ik am oold / me list no pleye for age
Gras tyme is doon / my fodder is now forage
This white tope / writeth myne olde yerys
Myn herte / is also mowled / as myne herys
But if ik fare / as dooth an Openers
That ilke fruyt' is euer lenger the wers
Til it be roten / in Mollok / or in stree
We olde men / I dredo so fare we
Til we be roten / kan we noght be rype
We hoppe alwey / whil þat the world wol pipe
ffor in oure wil / ther stiketh ever a nayl
To haue an hoor heer / and a grene tayl
As hath a leek / for thogh oure myght be goon
Oure wil desireth folie / euere in oon
ffor whan we may noght' doon / than wol we speke
Yet in oure asshen olde / is fyr yreke
ffoure gleedes haue we / whiche I shal deuyse [leaf 51]
Auauntyng' lyyng' Anger Coueitise
Thise foure sparkles / longen vn to eelde
Oure lymes / mowe wel been vnweelde

But wil ne shal noght faillen / that is sooth
And yet I haue alwey / a coltes tooth
As many a yeer / as it is passed henne
Syn þat my tappe of lyf / bigan to renne
ffor sikerlik' whan ik was bore anon
Deeth drogh the tappe of lyf / and leet it goon
And euere sith / hath so the tappe yronne
Til þat almoost / al empty is the tonne
The streem of lyf / now droppeth on the chymbe
The sely tonge / may wel rynge and chymbe
Of wrecchednesse / þat passed is ful yoore
With olde folk / saue dotage is namoore
¶ Whan þat oure hoost' hadde herd this sermonyng'
He gan to speke / as lordly as a kyng'
He seyde / what amounteth al this wit
What shal we speke al day / of holy writ
The deuel made / a Reue for to preche
Or of a Soutere / a Shipman / or a leche
Sey forth thy tale / and tarie noght the tyme
Lo Depeford / and it is half wey pryme
Lo Grenewych / ther many a sherewe is Inne
It were al tyme / thy tale to bigynne
¶ Now sires / quod this Osewold the Reue
I pray yow alle / þat ye noght yow greue
Thogh I answere / and som del sette his howue
ffor leueful is / with force / force of showue
This dronken Myllere / hath ytoold vs heer
How þat / bigiled was a Carpenter
Peraventure in scorn / for I am oon
And by youre leue / I shal hym quyte anon
Right / in his cherles termes / wol I speke
I pray to god / his nekke mote to-breke
He kan wel / in myn eye / seen a stalke
But in his owene / he kan noght seen a balke

[*No gap in the MS.*]

AT Trompyngtoñ / nat fer fro Cantebrygge Narratio
Ther gooth a brook / and ouer that a brygge
Vp on the which brook / ther stant a Melle [leaf 51, back]
And this is verray soothe / þat I yow telle
A Millere was ther dwellyng many a day
As any Pecok he was proud and gay
Pipen he koude / and fisshe / and nettes beete
And torne coppes / and wel wrastle and sheete
And by his belt he baar a long Panade
And of a swerd / ful trenchaunt was the blade
A ioly poppere / baar he in his pouche
Ther was no man / for peril dorste hym touche
A Sheffeld thwitel / baar he in his hose
Round was his face / and camuse was his nose
As piled as an Ape / was his skulle
He was a Market betere / atte fulle
Ther dorste no wight hand vp on hym legge
That he ne swoor / he sholde anon abegge
A theef he was for sothe / of corn and mele
And þat a sleigh / and vsant for to stele
His name was hoten / deynous Symkyn
A wif he hadde / comen of noble kyn
The person of the toun / hir fader was
With hire he yaf / ful many a panne a bras
ffor þat Symkyn / sholde in his blood allye
She was yfostred / in a Nonnerye
ffor Symkyn / wolde no wyf as he sayde
But she were wel ynorissed and a mayde
To sauen / his estaat of yemanrye
And she was proud / and peert as is a pye
A ful fair sighte / was it vp on hem two
On halidayes / biforn hire wolde he go

With his tipet' wounden aboute his heed
And she cam after / in a gyte of reed
And Symkyn / hadde hosen of the same
Ther dorste no wight' clepen hire but dame
Was noon so hardy / þat wente by the weye
That with hire / dorste rage / or ones pleye
But if he / wolde be slayn of Symkyn
With panade / or with knyf' or boydekyn
ffor Ialous folk / been *peri*louse eueremo
Algate / they wolde hir wyues wenden so
And eek / for she was som del smoterlich [leaf 52]
She was as diyne / as water in a dich
And ful of hoker / and of bismare
Hir thoghte / þat a lady sholde hir spare
What for hir kynrede / and hir nortelrye
That she hadde lerned / in the Nonnerye
A doghter hadde they / bitwix hem two
Of twenty yeer / with outen any mo
Sauyng a child / þat was of hal[f] yeer age
In Cradel it lay and was a *pro*pre page
This wenche / thikke and wel ygrowen was
With camuse nose / and eyen greye as glas
With buttokes brode / and brestes rounde and hye
But right fair was hir heer / I wol nat lye
¶ The *per*son of the toun / for she was so feir
In purpos was / to maken hire his heir
Bothe of his catel / and his Mesuage.
And straunge he made it' of hir mariage
His purpos was / for to bistowe hir hye
In to som worthy blood of Auncetrye
ffor holicherches good / moot been despended
On holicherches blood / þat is descended
Ther-fore he wolde his holy blood honoure
Thogh þat he / holy chirche sholde deuoure
¶ Greet sokne / hath this Millere out of doute
With whete and malt' of al the lande aboute

And nameliche / ther was a greet Collegge
Men clepeth / the soler halle of Cantebregge
Ther was hir whete / and eek hir malt ygrounde
And on a day / it happed in a stounde
Syk was this maunciple / on a maladie
Men wenden wisly / þat he sholde dye
ffor which this Millere / stal bothe mele and corn
An hondred tyme / moore than biforn
ffor ther biforn / he stal but curteisly
But now / he was a theef outrageously
ffor which the wardeyn / chidde and made fare
But ther-of / sette the Millere noght a tare
He craked boost / and swoor it was noght so
Thanne were ther / yonge poure scolers two
That' dwelten in the halle / of which I seye [leaf 52, back]
Testyf they were / and lusty for to pleye
And oonly / for hir myrthe and reuerye
Vp on the wardeyn / bisily they crye
To yeue hem leue / but a litel stounde
To go to Mille / and seen hir corn ygrounde
And hardily / they dorste leye hir nekke
The Millere / sholde noght stelen hem half a pekke
Of corn by sleighte / ne by force hem reue
And atte laste / the wardeyn yaf hem leue
Ioħñ highte that oon / and Aleyn highte that oother
Of oon town were they born / þat highte Strother
ffer in the North / I kan noght telle where
This Aleyn / maketh redy al his gere
And on an hors / the sak he caste anon
fforth gooth Aleyn the clerk / and also Ioħñ
With good swerd / and with bokeler by his syde
Ioħñ knew the wey / hym neded no gyde
And at the Mille / the sak adoun he layth
¶ Aleyn spak first' al hayl Symkyn in fayth
How fares thy faire doghter / and thy wyf
¶ Aleyn wel come / quod Symkyn by my lyf

And Iohñ also / how now / what do ye here
¶ By god quod Iohñ / Symond nede has na peere
Hym bihoues serue hym self / þat has na swayn
Or ellis / he is a fool / as clerkes sayn
Oure maunciple / I hope he wol be deed
Swa werkes ay / the wanges in his heed
And ther-fore is I come / and eek Alayn
To grynde oure corn / and carie it heem agayn
I pray yow / speed vs heythen / what ye may
¶ It shal be doon / quod Symkyn by my fay
What wol ye doon / whil þat it is in hande
By god / right by the hoper / wol I stande
Quod Iohñ / and se how the corn gas In
Yet saw I neuere / by my fader kyn
How þat the hoper / wagges til and fra
¶ Aleyn answerde / Iohan wiltow swa
Thanne wol I be byneth / by my crown
And se / how þat the mele falles down
In to the trogh / that sal be my desport [leaf 53]
ffor Iohñ in faith / I may been of youre sort
I is as ille a Millere / as ar ye
¶ This Millere / smyled of hir nycetee
And thoghte / al this nys doon / but for a wyle
They wene / þat no man may hem bigile
But by my thrift / yet shal I blere hir Iye
ffor al the sleighte / in hir Phislophye
The moore queynte crekys / þat they make
The moore wol I stele / whan I take
In stede of flour / yet wol I yeue hem bren
The grettest clerkes / been noght the wisest men
As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare
Of al hir art counte I noght a tare
Out of the dore / he gooth ful pryuely
Whan þat he saugh his tyme / softely
He looketh vp and doun / til he hath founde
The clerkes hors / ther as it stood ybounde

Bihynde the Mille / vnder a leefsel
And to the hors / he gooth hym faire and wel
He strepeth of the bridel / right anon
And whan the hors was laus / he gynneth gon
Toward the fen / ther wilde mares renne
And forth with wehe / thurgh thikke and thenne
This Millere gooth ayein / no word he seyde
But dooth his note / and with the clerkes pleyde
Til þat hir corn / was faire and wel ygrounde
And whan the mele / was sakked and ybounde
¶ This Iohñ gooth out' and fynt his hors away
And gan to crye / harrow and weilaway
Oure hors is lost'. Alayn for goddes banes
Step on thy feet / com of man al atanes
Allas oure wardeyn / has his palfrey lorn
¶ This Alayn al forgat' bothe mele and corn
Al was out of his mynde / his housbondrye
What whilk wey is he gane / he gan to crye
¶ The wyf cam lepyng' Inward with a ren
She seyde allas / youre hors gooth to the fen
With wilde mares / as faste as he may go
Vnthank come on his hand / þat boond hym so
And he þat bettre / sholde haue knyt the reyne [leaf 53, back]
¶ Allas quod Iohñ / Aleyn for Cristes peyne
Lay doun thy swerd / and I wol myn alswa
I is ful wight / God waat' as is a ra
By god hert' he sal nat scape vs bathe
Why ne had thow / pit the capil in the lathe
Il hail / by god Alayn / thow is a fonne
¶ This sely clerkes / haan ful faste yronne
Toward the fen / bothe Alayn and eek Iohñ
And whan the Millere seigh / þat they were gon
He half a busshel / of hir flour hath take
And bad his wyf / go knede it in a cake
He seyde I trowe / the clerkes were aferd
Yet kan a Millere / maken a clerkes berd

ffor al his art' ye lat hem goon hir weye
Lo where he gooth / ye lat the children pleye
They gete hym noght so lightly / by my croun
¶ Thise sely clerkes / rennen vp and doun
With keep / keep / stand / stand / Iossa warderere
Ga whistle thow / and I sal kepe hym heere
But shortly / til þat it was verray nyght'
They koude noght' thogh they dide al hir myght'
Hir capyl cacche / he ran alwey so faste
Til in a dych / they caughte hym at the laste
¶ Wery and weet' as beest is in the reyn
Comth sely Ioħñ / and with hym comth Aleyn
Allas quod Ioħñ / the day þat I was born
Now ar we dryuen / til hethyng *and* til scorn
Oure corn is stole / men wil vs foolis calle
Bothe the wardeyn / and oure felawes alle
And namely the Millere / weilawey
¶ Thus pleyneth Ioħñ / as he gooth by the wey
Toward the Mille / and Bayard in his hond
The Millere / sittyng by the fyr he fond
ffor it was nyght' and ferther myghte they noght'
But for the loue of god / they hym bisoght'
Of herberwe and of ese / as for hir peny
¶ The Millere seide agayn / if ther be eny
Swich as it is / yet shal ye haue youre part'
Myn hous is streyt' but ye han lerned art'
Ye kan by argumentz / make a place [leaf 54]
A myle brood / of twenty foot of space
Lat se now / if this place may suffise
Or make it rowm with speche / as is youre gyse
¶ Now Symond seyde this Ioħñ / by seint Cutberd'
Ay is thou myrie / and that is faire answerd
I haue herd seye / men sal tak' of twa thynges
Swilk as he fyndes / or tak' swilk as he brynges
But specialy / I pray thee hoost deere
Get vs som mete and drynke / and make vs cheere

And we wol payen / trewely atte fulle
With empty hand / men may none haukes tulle
Lo heere oure siluer / redy for to spende
¶ This Millere in to town / his doghter sende
ffor ale and breed / and rosted hem a goos
And boond hir hors / it sholde namoore go loos
And in his owene chambre / hem made a bed
With shetes and *with* chalons / faire yspred
Noght from his owene bed / but ten foot or twelue
His doghter hadde a bed / al by hir selue
Right in the same chambre by and by
It myghte be no bet' and cause why
Ther was no rowmer herberwe / in the place
They soupen / and they speken / hem to solace
And drynken euere stroong ale / at the beste
Aboute mydnyght / wente they to reste
Wel hath this Millere / vernysshed his heed
fful pale he was for-dronke / and noght reed
He yexeth / and he speketh thurgh the nose
As he were / on the quakke / or on the pose
To bedde he goth / and *with* hym goth his wyf
As any Iay / she light was and iolyf
So was hir ioly whistle / wel ywet'
The Cradel / at hir beddes feet is set'
To rokken / and to yeue the child to sowke
And whan *þat* dronken / al was in the Crowke
To bedde wente / the doghter right anon
To bedde gooth Aleyn / and also Iohñ
Ther nas namoore / hem neded no dwale
This Millere / hath so wisly bibbed ale
That as an hors / he snorteth in his sleep*e* [leaf 54, back]
Ne of his tayl bihynde / he took no keep*e*
His wyf bar hym / a burdon / a ful strong'
Men myghten hir routyng' heren a furlong'
The wenche / routeth eek p*ar* compaignye
¶ Aleyn the clerc' that herde this melodye

He poked Iohñ / and seyde slepestow
Herd thow euere / slyk a sang er now
Lo swilk a conplyng / is ymel hem alle
A wilde fyr / on thair bodyes falle
Wha herkned euere / swilk a ferly thyng
Ye they sal haue / the flour of il endyng
This lang night ther tydes me na reste
But yet na force / al sal be for the beste
ffor Iohñ seyde he / als euere moot I thryue
If þat I may / yon wenche wol I swyue
Som esement / has lawe shapen vs
ffor Iohñ / ther is a lawe / þat says thus
That gif a man / in a point be agreued
That in another / he sal be releued
Oure corn is stoln / soothly it is na nay
And we han had / an ille fit to day
And syn I sal / haue naan amendement
Agayn my los / I wil haue esement
By goddes saule / it sal naan other be
¶ This Iohñ answerde / Aleyn auyse thee
The Millere / is a perilous man he sayde
And if þat he / out of his sleep abrayde
He mighte doon vs bathe / a vilcynye
¶ Aleyn answerde / I counte hym noght a flye
And vp he rist / and by the wenche he crepte
This wenche lay vp righte / and faste slepte
Til he so neigh was / er she myghte aspie
That it hadde been / to late for to crie
And shortly for to seyn / they were at oon
Now pley Aleyn / for I wol speke of Iohñ
¶ This Iohñ lith stille / a furlang wey or two
And to hym self he maketh routhe and wo
Allas quod he / this is a wikked Iape
Now may I seyn / þat I is but an ape
Yet has my felawe / som what for his harm [leaf 55]
He has the Milleris doghter / in his arm

He auntred hym / and has his nedes sped
And I lye / as a draf sak / in my bed
And whan this iape / is told another day
I sal ben halden / a daf a Cokenay
I wil arise and auntre it' by my fayth
Vnhardy is vnsely / thus men sayth
¶ And vp he roos / and softely he wente
Vn to the Cradel / and in his hand it hente
And baar it softe / vn to his beddes feet'
Soone after this / the wyf hir routynt leet
And gan awake / and wente hir out to pisse
And cam agayn / and gan hir Cradel mysse
And groped heer and ther / but she foond noon
Allas quod she / I hadde almoost mysgoon
I hadde almoost' goon to the clerkes bed
Ey benedicite / thanne had I foule ysped
And forth she gooth / til she the Cradel fond
She gropeth alwey / forther *with* hir hond
And foond the bed / and thoghte noght but good
By cause / *þat* the Cradel by it stood
And nyste wher she was / for it was derk'
But faire and wel / she creep in to the clerk'
And lyth ful stille / and wolde haue caught a sleepe
With-Inne a while / this Iohñ the clerk vp leepe
And on this goode wyf / he leyth on soore
So murie a fyt' ne hadde she nat ful yoore
He priketh harde and depe / as he were mad
This ioly lyf / han thise two clerkes lad
Til *þat* / the thridde cok' bigan to synge
¶ Aleyn wax wery / in the dawenynge
ffor he hadde swonken / al the longe nyght'
And seyde / fare wel Malyn swete wight'
The day is come / I may no lenger byde
But eueremo / wher so I go or ryde
I is thyn awen clerk' so haue I sel
¶ Now deere lemman quod she / go fare wel

But er thow go / o thyng' I wol thee telle
Whan that thow wendest / homward by the Melle
Right at the entree / of the dore bihynde [leaf 55, back]
Thow shalt a Cake / of half a busshel fynde
That was ymaked / of thyn owene mele
Which þat I heelp / my sire for to stele
And good lemman / god thee saue and kepe
And with that word / almoost he gan to wepe
¶ Aleyn vp rist' and thoghte er þat it dawe
I wol go crepen In / by my felawe
And fond the Cradel / with his hond anon
By god thoghte he / al wrang I haue mysgon
Myn heed is toty / of my swynk to nyght'
That maketh me / þat I go noght aright'
I woot wel by the Cradel / I haue mysgo
Here lyth the Millere / and his wyf also
And forth he gooth / on twenty deueleway
Vn to the bed / ther as the Millere lay
He wende haue cropen / by his felawe Iohñ
And by the Millere / In he creep anoon
And caughte hym by the nekke / and softe he spak'
He seyde thou Iohñ / thow Swyneshed awak'
ffor cristes saule / and here a noble game
ffor by that lord / þat called is Seint Iame
As I haue thries / in this shorte nyght
Swyued the Milleris doghter / bolt vp-right
Whil thow hast' as a coward been agast'
¶ Ye false harlot' quod the Millere hast'
A false traytour / false clerk' quod he
Thou shalt be deed / by goddes dignytee
Who dorste be so bold / to disparage
My doghter / that is come of swich lynage
And by the throte bolle / he caughte Alayn
And he hente hym / despitously agayn
And on the nose / he smoot hym with his fest'
Doun ran the blody streem / vp on his brest'

And on the floor / with nose and mouth tobroke
They walwen / as doon two pigges in a poke
And vp they goon / and doun agayn anoon
Til þat the Millere / sporned on a stoon
And doun he fil / bakward vp on his wyf
That wiste no thyng of this nyce stryf
ffor she was falle aslepe / a litel wight [leaf 56]
With Iohñ the clerk / that waked hadde al nyght
And with the fal / out of hir sleepe she brayde
Help holy cros of Bromholm / she sayde
In manus tuas / lord to thee I calle
Awake Symond / the feend is on me falle
Myn herte is broken / help I nam but ded
Ther lyth oon vp on my wombe / and vp myn hed
Help Symkyn / for the false clerkes fighte
¶ This Iohñ sterte vp / as faste as euere he myghte
And graspeth by the walles / to and fro
To fynde a staf / and she sterte vp also
And knew the estres / bet than dide this Iohñ
And by the wal / a staf she foond anon
And saugh / a litel shymeryng of a light
ffor at an hole / in shoon the moone bright
And by that light she saugh hem bothe two
But sikerly / she nyste who was who
But as she saugh / a whit thyng in hir Iye
And whan she gan / this white thyng espye
She wende the clerk hadde wered a voluper
And with the staf / she drow ay ner and ner
And wende han hit / this Aleyn atte fulle
And smoot the Millere / on the piled skulle
That doun he gooth / and cryde harrow I dye
Thise clerkes bette hym wel / and lete hym lye
And greithen hem / and tooke hir hors anon
And eek hir mele / and on hir wey they gon
And at the Mille / yet they toke hir cake
Of half a busshel flour / ful wel ybake

¶ Thus is the proude Millere / wel ybete
And hath ylost the gryndyng of the whete
And payed for the souper / euerydel
Of Aleyn / and of Iohñ / that bette hym wel
His wyf is swyued / and his doghter als
Lo which it is / a Millere to be fals
And ther-fore this prouerbe / is seyd ful sooth
Hym thar nat wene wel / þat yuele dooth
A gilour shal hym self / bigiled be
And god / that sitteth heighe in magestee
Saue al this compaignie / grete and smale [leaf 56, back]
Thus haue I quyt the Millere / in my tale

¶ Here endeth the Reues tale. ☙

[*Small break in the MS.*]

¶ The prologe of the Cookes tale

THe Cook' of Londō / whil the Reue spak'
ffor ioye hym thoughte / hę clawed hym on the bak'
Haha quod he / for Cristes passiō
This Millere / hadde a sharpe conclusiō
Vp on his argument' of herbergage
Wel seyde Salomon / in his langage
Ne bryng nat euery man / in to thyn hous
ffor herberwyng' by nyghte is perilous
Wel oghte a man / auysed for to be
Whom þat he broghte / in to his priuetee
I pray to god / so yeue me sorwe and care
If euer sith / I highte Hogge of ware
Herde I a Millere / bettre yset awerk/
He hadde a iape of malice / in the derk'
But god forbede / that we stynten heere (hic)
ffor if ye / vouche sauf to heere (audire)
A tale of me / that am a poure man
I wol yow telle / as wel as euere I kan
A litel iape / that fil in oure Citee
¶ Oure hoost answerde / and seyde I graunte it thee
Now tel on Roger / looke that it be good
ffor many a pastee / hastow laten blood
And many a Iakke of Douere / hastow soold
That hath been twies hoot' and twies coold
Of many a pilgrym / hastow Cristes curs
ffor of thy persle / yet they fare the wors
That they han eten / with thy stubbul goos
ffor in thy shoppe / is many a flye loos
Now tel on / gentil Roger / by thy name
But yet I praye thee / be nat wrooth for game
A man may seye ful sooth / in game and pley
¶ Thow seist ful sooth / quod Roger by my fey

But sooth pley quade pley / as the fflemyng seith [leaf 57]
And ther-fore herry Bailly / by thy feith
Be thou nat wrooth / er we departen heer
Thogh þat my tale / be of an hostiler 4360
But nathelees / I wol nat telle it yit
But er we parte / ywis thow shalt be quyt
And ther with al / he lough / and made cheere
And seyde his tale / as ye shal after heere 4364

[*Small break in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth the Cook his tale.

A Prentis / whilom dwelled in oure Citee
And of a craft' of vitaillers was he
Gaillard he was / as goldfynch in the shawe
Broun as a berye / a p*r*opre short' felawe
With lokkes blake / ykembd ful fetisly
Dauncen he koude / so wel and iolily
That he / was clepyd Perkyn Reuelour
He was / as ful / of loue and p*ar*amour
As is the hyue / of hony swete
Wel was the wenche / þ*at* w*ith* hym myghte meete
At euery bridale / wolde he synge *and* hoppe
He loued bet the Tauerne / than the Shoppe
ffor / whan ther any ridyng' was in Chepe
Out of the shoppe / thider wolde he lepe
Til þ*at* he hadde / al the sighte yseyn
And daunced wel / he wolde noght come ageyn
And gadred hym / a meynee of his sort'
To hoppe and synge / and maken swich disport'
And ther / they setten steuene / for to meete
To pleyen at the dees / in swich a streete
ffor in the town / nas ther no Prentys
That fairer / koude caste a paire of dys
Than Perkyn koude / and ther-to he was free
Of his dispense / in place of pryuetee
That foond his maister wel / in his chaffare
ffor ofte tyme / he foond his box ful bare
ffor sikerly / a prentys reuelour
That haunteth dees / ryot' or p*ar*amour
His maister / shal it in his shoppe abye [leaf 57, back]
Al haue he / no part of the Minstralcye
ffor thefte and riot / they been conue*r*tible
Al konne he pleye / on Giterne / or Rubible

Reuel and trouthe / as in a lowe degree
They been ful wrothe al day / as men may see
¶ This ioly Prentys / with his Maister bood
Til he were neigh / out of his prentishood
Al were he snybbed / bothe erly and late
And som tyme / lad with reuel to Newgate
But atte laste / his maister hym bithoghte
Vp on a day / whan he his papir soghte
Of a prouerbe / that seith this same word
Wel bet is roten appul / out of hoord
Than þat it rotte / al the remenaunt'
So fareth it / by a riotous seruaunt'
It is ful lasse harm / to lete hym pace
Than he shende / alle the seruantz in the place
Ther fore / his maister gaf hym acquitaunce
And bad hym go / with sorw / and with meschaunce
And thus this ioly prentys / hadde his leeue
Now lat hym riote / al the nyght' or leeue
And for ther nys no theef / with-oute a lowke
That helpeth hym / to wasten and to sowke
Of that he brybe kan / or borwe may
Anon / he sente his bed / and his array
Vn to a compeer / of his owene sort'
That loued dees / and reuel / and disport'
And hadde a wyf / that heeld for contenaunce
A shoppe / and swyued for hir sustenaunce

Of this Cokes tale
maked Chaucer na
moore [*in the left margin*]

[*Rest of the page blank.*]

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

Her endeth̄ o tale of the Cooke *and* her folowyth̄ a nother tale of the same cooke [MS Reg. 17 D. xv. leaf 66, back]

Lythen̄ *and* listeneþe *and* harkeneþe Arigh̄te
And ye schulne here of¹ A dougḥty knygh̄te
Sir Iohan of¹ Boundis was his name
He couþe of¹ norture And mocheh̄ of¹ game
Thre sonnes þe knygh̄te hadde with̄ his bodye wonne
The eldeste was a mocche schrewe And soone he bigonne
His breþerne louede wele her ffadre And of¹ hym² were Agaste
The eldeste desaruede his ffaders Curse And hadde hitt¹ atte
The gode knygh̄te his ffadre lyuede so ȝore [þe laste
That deþe was hym² comen̄ And handelede hym² ffulle sore
The gode knygh̄te carede sore syke þere he laye
How his chyldren̄ schulde lyuen̄ Affter his daye [leaf 67]
He hadde bene wyde where buttenon husbande he was [Reg. 17 D. xv. *ends.*]
Alh̄ the londe that he hadde it was purchas. [Harl. 1758, leaf 46, *begins.*]
ffayn he wolde it were dressid among¹ hem alle.
That eche of hem had his part as it myght falle.
Tho sent he in to contre after²¹ wise knyghtis. [¹ r^ *is for* r]
To helpe delen his londis *and* dressen hem to rightis.
He sent hem word bi *lett*res thei schulde hye blyue.
Yf thei wolde speke with̄ hym while he̊ was on lyue.

Tho the knyghtis herden sike that he lay.
Had thei no rest nother'[1] nygħt ne day. [[1] *NB. all* r) = *MS* r/]
Tiłł thei come to hym ther' he lay stille.
On his detħ bed to a-bide goddis wille. 24
Then seide the good knyght sike ther' he lay.
Lordis I yow warne for sothe with-out nay.
I may no lenger' lyuen here in this stou*n*de.
ffor thorough goddis wiłł detħ drawes me to grou*n*de. 28
Ther' nas non of hem alle that herde hym a rigħt.
That thei ne had routhe of that ilke knygħt.
And seiden sir/ for goddis loue ne dismay you nogħt.
God may done bote of bale that is now wrougħt. 32
Than spake the good knyght sike there he lay.
Bote of bale god may sende I wot it is no nay.
But I beseke you knyghtis for the loue of me.
Gotħ *and* dressitħ my londis among' my sones thre. 36
And for the loue of god delith not hem a mys.
And foryeteth not Gamelyn my yong' sone that is.
Taketh hede to that one as wełł as to that other.
Seeld ye seen any heier' helpen his brother/./ 40
Tho leten thei the knygħt lyen that was not in hele.
And wentyn in to cou*n*seile his londis for to dele.
ffor to delen hem alle to oon that was here thogħt.
And for Gamelyn was yongist he schulde haue nogħt. 44
Ałł the londe that ther' was thei dalten it in two.
And letyn Gamelyn the yong with-outen lond go.
And eche of hem seide to other' fułł lowde.
His brethren mygħt yeue hym londe when he good cowde.
When thei had delid the londe at here wille. 49
Thei comen to the knygħt there he lay stille.
And tolde hym a-non how thei had wrogħt.
And the knygħt ther' he lay likid it right nogħt. 52
¶ Than seide the knygħt be seynt Martyn.
ffor ałł that ye haue don yet is the londe myn.
ffor goddis loue neigħboris stondith stille.
And I wiłł delyn my lond rigħt aftir' my wille. 56

Iohn my eldist sone schall haue plowes fyue.
That was myn fadris heritage while he was on lyue.
And my myddlist sone fyue plowes of londe.
That I halp for to gete with my right honde.
And all myn other' purchas of londis *and* ledis. [leaf 46, back]
That I be-quethe Gamelyn *and* all my good stedis.
And beseke you good men that lawe con of londe.
ffor Gamelyns loue that my quest' stonde.
Thus dalt the knyght his londe bi his day.
Right on his deth bed sike ther' he lay.
And sone aftirward he lay stoon stille.
And died whan tyme come as it' was cristes wille.
A-noon as he was deed *and* vndir' gras graue.
Sone the eldir' brother' giled the yong knaue
He toke in to his honde his londe *and* his lede.
And Gamelyn hym self to clothen *and* to fede.
He clothed hym *and* fedde hym yuell *and* eke wrothe.
And lete his londis for-fare *and* his housis bothe
His parkes *and* his wodis *and* dide no thyng' welle.
And sithen he it a-bought on his owne felle.
So long' was Gamelyn in his brothris halle.
ffor the strengest of good will thei doutedyn hym alle.
Ther' was none ther' yn nother' yong' ne olde.
That wolde wrath Gamelyn were he neuyr' so bolde.
¶ Gamelyn stood on a day in his brothers yerde.
And bigan with his honde to hondill his berde.
He thought on his londis that lay vnsawe.
And his faire okis that doune were drawe.
His Parkis were broken *and* his dere reuyd.
Of all his good stedis noon was hym bi-leuyd./
His housis were vn-hiled *and* full yuell dight
Tho thought Gamelyn it went not a-right.
Aftir'-warde cam his brother' walkyng' thare.
And seide to Gamelyn is our' mete yare.
Tho wrathed hym Gamelyn *and* swore bi goddis book.
Thou schalt go bake thi self I will not be thi Cook.

Now brother' Gamelyn how vnswarest thou now.
Thou spakest neuyr' suche a worde as thou dost now.
Be my feith̄ seide Gamelyn now me thynketh nede.
Of alle the harmes that I haue I toke neuyr' yet hede. 96
My parkis/ ben broken *and* my deer' bi-reuyd.
Of myn armes *and* my stedis noght is me bileuyd.
Aℓℓ that my fadir' me bi-quath aℓℓ goth to schame.
And therfore haue thou goddis curs brother' be thyn name./
Than spake his brother' that rape was of rees. 101
Stonde stille gadlyng *and* holde thi pees.
Thou schalt be fayn to haue thi mete *and* thi wede.
What spekest' thou gadlyng' of londe or of lede. 104
Than seide Gamelyn the childe that was yeng'.
Cristes curs mote he haue that clepeth̄ me gadlyng.
I am no worse gadlyng' ne no worse wight.
But borne of a lady *and* geten of a knygh̄t. [leaf 47]
Ne dorst he not to Gamelyn neu*er* a foot go. 109
But clepid to hym his men *and* seide to hem tho.
Goth *and* betith this boy *and* reueth hym his witte.
And lete hym lerne a nother' tyme to vnsware me bette.
Thèn seide the childe yong' Gamelyn. 113
Cristis curs mote thou haue brother' art thou myn.
And if I schaℓℓ algate be betyn a-noon.
Cristes curs mote thou haue but thou be that oon. 116
And a-non his brother' in that grete hete.
Made his men to fette staues Gamelyn to bete.
When eu*er*y of hem had a staff' nomen.
Gamelyn was ware tho he sigh hem comen. 120
Tho Gamelyn sigh hem comen he lokid ou*er* aℓℓ.
And was war' of a pesteℓℓ stood vndir' the waℓℓ./
Gamelyn was ligh̄t *and* thider' gon to lepe.
And droff alle his brethers men right sone on an hepe 124
And lokid as a wilde lion *and* leide on good wone.
Tho his brother' sigh that he began to gone.
He fleigh vp in to a lofte *and* schette the dore faste.
Thus Gamelyn with his pesteℓℓ made hem alle a-gaste. 128

Some for Gamelyns loue and some for eie.
Alle thei drowhen hem to halues tho he gan to pleie.
What now seide Gamelyn euyll mote ye the.
Will ye begynne contek' *and* so sone fle.
Gamelyn soughte his brother' whither' he was flowe.
And saugh where he loked oute at a wyndowe.
Brother' seide Gamelyn come a litell nere.
And I will teche the to pleie at the bokelere.
His brother' hym answerde *and* seide be seynt Richere.
While that pestell is in thi honde I will come no nere.
Brother' I will make thi pees I swere bi cristes ore
Cast a-weie the pestell *and* wrath the no more.
I most nede seide Gamelyn wrath me at ones.
ffor thou wolde make thi men to breke my bones.
Ne had I had mayn *and* myght in myn armes.
To haue putte hem fro me thei wolde haue do me harmes.
¶ Gamelyn seide his brother' be thou not wroth.
ffor to seen the haue harme me it' were right' loth.
I ne dide it noght brother' but for a fondyng.
ffor to loken if' thou art strong *and* art so yeng.
Come a-doune then to me *and* graunt me my bone.
Of oo thyng' I will the axe *and* we schull saught sone.
Doune than come his brother' that fekill was *and* felle.
And was swithe sore a-ferd of the pestelle.
He seide brothir' Gamelyn axe me thi bone.
And loke thou me blame but I it graunt sone./
Than seide Gamelyn brother' y-wis. [leaf 47, back]
¶ And we schull be at one thou muste graunte me this.
All that my fadir' me by-quath while that he was on lyue.
Thou muste do me it haue yef we schull not stryue.
That schalt thou haue Gamelyn I swere be cristes ore.
All that thi fadir' the by-quath though thou woldest haue
Thi londe that lieth leye well it schall be sowe. [more.
And thyn housis reisid vp that ben leide full lowe.
Thus seide the knyght to Gamelyn with mouth.
And thought on falsnes as he well couth.

The knyght thought on treson *and* Gamelyn on noon.
And wente and kissed his brother *and* whan thei were at [oon.
Allas yong Gamelyn no thyng he ne wiste.
With suche fals treson his brother hym kiste
¶ Lyitheneth *and* listeneth *and* holdith your tonge.
And ye schull here talkyng of Gamelyn the yonge.
Ther was ther be siden cried a wrastlyng
And therfore ther was sette a Ram *and* a Ryng./
And Gamelyn was in will to wende therto.
ffor to preuyn hys myght what he coude do.
Brother seide Gamelyn be seynt Richere.
Thou moste lene me to nyght a liteli cursere.
That is fresch to the sporis on for to ride.
I most on an erand a liteli here be side.
Bi god seide his brother of stedis in my stalle.
Go *and* chese the the best spare noon of hem alle.
Of stedis *and* of cursers that stonden hem be side.
And telle me good brother whider thou wilt ride.
Here be side brother is cried a wrastlynge.
And there fore schall be set a Ram *and* Rynge.
Moche worschip it were brother to vs alle.
Might I the Ram *and* the Ryng bryngen home to this halle./
A stede ther was sadelid smertly *and* skete.
Gamelyn dide a peire of sporis faste on his fete.
He sette his foot in the stirop the stede he bi-strood.
And toward the wrastlynge the yong childe rood.
Tho Gamelyn the yonge was riden oute at gate.
The fals knyght his brother loked yet aftir thate.
And besought ihesu crist that is heuyn kyng.
He myght breke his nekke in that wrastlyng.
As sone a Gamelyn come there the place was.
He light downe of his stede *and* stood on the gras.
And there he herde a ffrankeleyn welaweie syng.
And bi-gan bitterly his hondis for to wryng.
Gode man seide Gamelyn whi makist thou this fare.
Is ther no man that may you helpen out of care.

Allas seide the ffrankeleyn that euyr I was bore.
ffor twey stalworth sones I wene that I haue lore. [leaf 48]
A Champion is in the place that hath wrought me sorowe.
ffor he hath slayne my two sones but yef god hem borowe.
I wolle yeue ten pounde bi ihesu criste *and* more.
With the nones that I fonde a man to handle hym sore.
Gode man seide Gamelyn wilt thou wel done.
Holde my hors while my man draweth of my schone.
And helpe my man to kepe my clothes *and* my stede.
And I will in to place gone to loke if I may spede.
By god seide the ffrankeleyn it schall be done.
I will my self be thi man to drawe of thi schone.
And wende thou in to place ihesu criste the spede.
And drede not of thi clothis ne of thi good stede.
Barfoot *and* vngirt Gamelyn yn cam.
Alle that were in the place hede of hym thei nam.
How he dorste auntre hym to done his myght.
That was so doughti a Champioun in wrastlyng *and* in fight.
Vp sterte the Champion rapeli a-noon.
Toward yong Gamelyn he bi-gan to goon.
And seide who is thi fadir *and* who is thi sire.
ffor sothe thou arte a gret fool that thou come here.
¶ Gamelyn answerde the Champion tho.
Thou knewe wel my fadir while he couthe go.
Whiles he was on lyue be seynt Martyn.
Sir Ion of Boundis was his name *and* I Gamelyn.
ffelawe seide the Champion so mote I thryue.
I knewe wel thi fadir whiles he was on lyue.
And thi self Gamelyn I will that thou it here.
While thou were a yong boy a moche schrewe thou were.
Than seide Gamelyn *and* swore bi cristes ore.
Now I am older wax thou schalt fynde me a more.
By god seide the Champion wel come mote thou be.
Come thou ones in my honde thou schalt neuer the.
¶ It was wel with-yn the nyght *and* the mone schone.
When Gamelyn *and* the Champion to gider gon gone.

The Champion cast tornes to Gamelyn that was prest.
And Gamelyn stood *and* bade hym done his best.
Than seide Gamelyn to the Champioun.
Thou art fast a-boute to bryng' me a-doun.
Now I haue proued mony tornes of thyne.
Thou most he seide proue oon or two of myne.
Gamelyn to the Champion yede smertly a-none.
Of all the tornes that he couthe he schewid hym but one.
And kest hym on the lift side that thre ribbes to-brake.
And therto his one arme that yaf a gret crake.
Than seide Gamelyn smertly a-noon.
Schall it be holde for a cast or ellis for noon.
By god seide the Champion whether' it be. [leaf 48, back]
He that cometh ones in thi honde schall he neuyr' the.
Than seide the ffrankeleyn that had his sones there.
Blessid be thou Gamelyn that euyr' thou bore were.
The ffrankeleyn seide to the Champion on hym stood hym
This is yong' Gamelyn that taught the this pleye. [noon eye.
A-yen vnswarid the Champion that liked no thyng well.
He is alther' maister' *and* his pleie is right fell.
Sithen I wrastlid first it is gone yore.
But I was neuyr' in my lyf handelid so sore.
Gamelyn stood in the place a-non with-out serke.
And seide if ther' be mo lete hem come to werke.
The Champion that payned hym to wirke sore.
Hit semeth bi his contenaunce that he will no more.
Gamelyn in the place stood still as stoon.
ffor to a-bide wrastlyng' but ther' come noon.
Ther' was non with Gamelyn that wolde wrastle more.
ffor he handlid the Champion so wondirly sore.
Two gentill men yemed the place.
Come to Gamelyn god yeue hym good grace.
And seide to hym do on thi hosen *and* thi schoon.
ffforsothe at this tyme this faire is doon./
And than seide Gamelyn so mote I well fare.
I haue not yet hauyndell sold my ware.

¶ Tho seide the Champion so brok I my swere.
He is a foolꝭ that ther'-of bieth thou sellest it so dere.
Tho seide the frankeleyn that was in moche care.
ffelaw he seide whi lakkest thou this ware.
Be seynt Iame in Gales that mony man hath soght.
Yet is it to good chepe that thou hast boght.
Tho that wardeyns were of that wrastlyng.
Come and brought Gamelyn the Ram *and* the Ryng'.
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
A Gamelyn thought it was a faire thyng.
And went with moche ioye home in the mornyng'.
His brother' sigh where he came with the gret route.
And bad schit the gate *and* holde hym with-oute.
The porter' of his lord was sore a-gast'.
And sterte a-noon to the gate *and* lokked it fast.
¶ Now lithe*þ* *and* listeneth bothe yong *and* olde.
And ye schulꝭ here gamyn of Gamelyn the bolde.
Gamelyn come to *þ*e yate for to haue come yn.
Than was it schit fast with a pyn.
Than seide Gamelyn porter' vndo the yate.
ffor a gode mannes sone stonde*þ* ther'-ate.
Than answarde the porter' *and* sware bi goddis berde.
Thou ne schalt Gamelyn come in to this yerde.
Thou lixt' seide Gamelyn so broke I my chyn.
He smote the wiket with his foot *and* brake a-waye the pyn.
The porter' sigh tho it myght no better' be. [leaf 49]
He sette foot on erthe *and* be-gan to flee.
Be my fay seide Gamelyn that traueile is lore.
ffor I am on foote as light as thou haddist it swore
Gamelyn ouer-toke the porter' *and* his tene wrake.
And girt hym in the nekke that the boon to-brake.
And toke hym by that one arme *and* threwe hym in a welle./
.Vij.c. fadome it was depe as I haue herd telle.
Whan Gamelyn the yong' thus had pleide his plaie.
Alle that in the yeerde were drowen hem a-waie.

Thei dredyn hym full sore for werke that he wrought.
And for the faire companye that he thider brought.
Gamelyn yede to the yate *and* lete it vp wide.
He lete yn alle that gone wolde or ride.
And seide ye be welcome with-out any greue:
ffor we will be maisters here *and* axe no man leue.
Yestirday I left seide yong Gamelyne.
In my brother seler fyue toun wyne.
I will not this companye parten on twyn.
And ye will don aftir me while sope is ther-yn.
And if my brother gruche or make foule chere.
Other of spence of mete *and* drynke that we spende here.
I am our catour *and* bere our alther purs.
He schall haue for his grucchyng seynt Marie curs.
Mi brother is a nygon I swere be cristes ore.
And we will spende largely that he hath sparid yore.
And who that maketh grucchyng that we here dwelle.
He schall to the porter in to the draw welle.
Vij. daies *and* .vij. nyght Gamelyn helde his fest.
With moche solace was there *and* non chest.
In a litell toret his brother lay steke.
And sigh hem waste his good *and* dorst not speke.
¶ Erly in a mornyng on the .viij. day.
The gestis come to Gamelyn *and* wolde gone here way.
Lordis seide Gamelyn will ye so hye.
All the wyne is not yet dronke so broke I myn eye.
Gamelyn in his herte was full wo.
When his gestis toke here leue fro hym for to go.
He wolde thei had dwellid lenger *and* thei seide nay.
But bi-taught Gamelyn god *and* good day.
Thus made Gamelyn his fest *and* brought it well to ende.
And after his gestis toke leue to wende.
¶ Litheth *and* listenyth *and* holdith your tonge.
And ye schull here gamen of Gamelyn the yonge.
Herkenyth lordyngis *and* listneth a-right.
When alle gestis were gone how Gamelyn was dight./

Aſt the while that Gamelyn helde his mangerie. [leaf 49, back]
His brothir thought on hym be wreke with his trecherie.
Tho Gamelyns gestis were riden *and* gone.
Gamelyn stood a-none allone frend had he none.
Tho aftir fell sone with-yn a litill stonde.
Gamelyn was taken *and* full hard bonde.
fforth come the fals knyght out of the solere.
To Gamelyn his brother he yede full nere.
And seide to Gamelyn who made the so bolde.
ffor to streien my stour of my housholde.
Brother seide Gamelyn wrath the right noght.
ffor it is mony day gone sith it was boght.
ffor brother þ profite/ thou hast had be seynt Richere.
Of .xv. plowes of londe this sixtene yere.
And of alle the bestis thou hast forth bredde.
That my fadir me bi-quath on his deth bedde.
Of alt this sixtene yere I yeue the the prowe.
ffor the mete *and* the drynke that we haue spendid nowe.
Than seide the fals knyght euyll mote he the.
Herken brother Gamelyn what I will yeue the.
ffor of my body brother here geten haue I non.
I will make the myn eire I swere bi seynt Iohn.
Parfay seide Gamelyn *and* it so be.
And thou thynkist as thou seist god yelde it the.
No thyng wist Gamelyn of his brother gile.
Therfore he hym bi-giled in a litill while.
Gamelyn seide he oo thyng I the telle.
Tho thou threwe my porter in the drawe welle.
I swoor in that wrath *and* in that gret moote.
That thou schuldist be bounde both hond *and* foote.
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
ffor to holden myn a-vow as I the bi-hote.
To ben myn heire of londe hous *and* cote.
Brother seide Gamelyn as mote I the.
Thou schalt not be for-swore for the loue of me.

Tho maden thei Gamelyn to sitte for he schulde not stonde.
Tiłł thei had hym bounde bothe foot *and* honde.
The fals knyght his brother' of Gamelyn was a-gast.
And sent aftir' feters to feteren hym fast.
His brother made lesyngis on hym there he stood.
And tolde hem that comen yn that Gamelyn was wood.
Gamelyn stode to a post bounden in the halle.
Tho that comen yn lokid on hym alle.
Euer stood Gamelyn euyn vp right'.
But mete ne drynke had he non neither' day ne nyght.
Than seide Gamelyn brother' be myn hals.
Now I haue a-spied thou art a parti fals.
Had I wist' the treson that thou hast founde./
I wolde haue yeue strokis or I had be bounde. [leaf 50]
Gamelyn stoed bounde stille as ony stoon.
Two daies *and* two nyghtis mete had he noon.
Than seide Gamelyn that stoed y-bounde strong'.
Adam spenser' me thynketh I fast to long'.
Adam spenser' now I beseche the.
ffor the moche loue my fadir' loued the.
Yf thou may come to the keys lese me out' of bond.
And I wiłł parte with the of my fre lond.
Than seide Adam that was the spenser'.
I haue seruyd thi brother' this .xvj. yere.
Yf I lete the goon out of his boure.
He wolde saie aftirwarde I were a traitoure./
Adam seide Gamelyn so brok I myn hals.
Thou schalt fynde my brother' at the last fals.
Therfore brother' Adam lose me out of bondis.
And I wiłł parte with the of my fre londis.
Vp suche forward seide Adam y-wis.
I wiłł do ther'-to all that in me is.
Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I the.
I wiłł holde the couenaunt *and* thou wiłł helpe me.
A-noon as Adams lord to bedde was goon.
Adam toke the keyes *and* lete Gamelyn out a-noon.

He vnlokked Gamelyn bothe hondis *and* feet'.
In hope of auaun*c*ement that he hym bi-heet'.
Than seide Gamelyn thankid be goddis sonde
Now I am lose bothe foot *and* honde.
Had I now eten *and* dronken a-right./
Ther' is noon in this hous schulde bynde me this nyght.
Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as ony stoon.
And lad hym in to spense raply a-noon.
And sette hym to soper' right in a pryue stede.
He bad hym do gladly *and* Gamelyn so dide.
A-noon as Gamelyn had eten weⁿ *and* fyne.
And therto dronken weⁿ of the rede wyne.
Adam seide Gamelyn what is now thi reed.
Or I go to my brother' *and* gird of his heed./
Gamelyn seide Adam it schaⁿ not be so.
I con teche the a rede that is worth the two.
I wote weⁿ for sothe that this is no nay.
We schuⁿ haue a mangerie right on sonday.
Abbotes *and* priours mony here schaⁿ be.
And other' men of holy chirche as I telle the.
Thou schalt stonde vp bi the post as thou were bound fast.
And I schaⁿ leue hem vn-loke that a-weie thou may hem
Whan that thei haue eten *and* waschen here hondis. [cast./
Thou schalt biscke hem alle to bryng' the out of bondis.
And if thei wiⁿ borow the that were good game. [leaf 50, back]
Than were thou out of prison *and* I out of' blame.
And if eche of hem saie to vs nay.
I schaⁿ do a nother/ I swere be this day.
Thou schalt haue a good staf *and* I will haue a nother/
And cristes curs haue that oon that faileth that other/
Ye for god seide Gamelyn I say it for me.
If I faile on my side yueⁿ mote I the.
Yf we schuⁿ algate assoile hem of here synne.
Warne me brother' Adam whan we schuⁿ be-gynne.
Gamelyn seide Adam be seynt charite.
I wiⁿ warne the biforne whan it schaⁿ be.

Whan I wynk on the loke for to gone.
And cast a-weie thi feters *and* come to me a-none.
Adam seide Gamelyn blessid be thy bones.
That is a good counseile yeuen for the nones.
Yf thei warne me to bryng me out of bendis.
I wiłł sette good strokes right on here lendis.
Tho the sonday was comen *and* folke to the feste.
ffaire thei were welcomed bothe leste *and* meste.
And euer as thei at halle dore come yn.
Thei cast here ye on yong' Gamelyn.
The fals knyght his brother' fułł of trecherie.
Alle the gestis that ther' were at the mangerie.
Of Gamelyn his brother' he tolde hem with mouth.
Alł the harme *and* the schame that he telle couth.
Tho thei were seruyd of messis two or thre.
Than seide Gamelyn how serue ye me.
It is noght weł seruyd bi god that alł made.
That I sitte fastyng *and* other' men make glade.
The fals knyght his brother' ther' as he stood.
Tolde alle gestis that Gamelyn was wood.
And Gamelyn stood stille *and* vnswared right noght.
But Adams wordis he helde in his thoght.
Tho Gamelyn gan speke deolfully with alle.
To the gret lordis that seeten in the halle.
Lordis he seide for cristes passion.
Helpe to bryng Gamelyn out of prison.
Than seide an Abbot sorow on his cheke.
He schałł haue cristes curs *and* seynt maries eke.
That the out of prison beggith or borow.
But euer worth hym weł that doth the moche sorow.
Aftir' that abbot' than spake a nother'.
I wolde thyn heed were of theigh thou were my brother'.
Alle that the borow foule mote hem falle.
Thus thei seiden alle that were in the halle.
Than seide a priour' euył mote he preue.
It is gret sorow *and* care boy thou art on lyue. [leaf 51]

Ow seide Gamelyn so broke I my bone.
Now I haue spied that frendis haue I none.
Cursed mote he worth both flesch *and* blood.
That euer doth priour or Abbot any good.
Adam the spenser toke vp the cloth.
And loked on Gamelyn *and* sigh that he was wroth.
Adam on the pantrie litill thoght.
But two good staues to the halle dore he broght.
Adam loked on Gamelyn *and* he was ware a-none.
And cast a-weie the feters *and* bi-gan to gone.
Tho he cam to Adam he toke the oon staf.
And bigan to worche *and* good strokes yaf.
Gamelyn come in to the halle *and* Adam spenser bothe.
And lokid hem a-boute as thei had ben wrothe.
Gamelyn spreyneth holi water with a Oken spire.
That some that stood vp right fell in the fire.
Ther was no lewid man that in the halle stood.
That wolde do Gamelyn any thyng but good.
But stodyn be siden *and* lete hem both wirche.
ffor thei had no reweth of men of holi chirche.
Abbot or priour Monk or Chanoun.
That Gamelyn ouertoke a-noon thei yeden doun.
Ther was non of alle that with his staf mette.
That he made hem ouerthrowe *and* quyt hem his dette.
Gamelyn seide Adam for seynt charite.
Paie good lyueray for the loue of me.
And I will kepe the dore so euer here I masse./
Er thei ben assoiled ther schall noon passe.
Doute the noght seide Gamelyn while we ben in fere.
Kepe thou well the dore *and* I will worche here.
By-stere the good Adam *and* let ther non fle.
And we schull telle largely how mony that ther be.
Gamelyn seide Adam do hem but good.
Thei ben men of holy chirche drawe of hem no blood.
Saue well the crowne *and* do hem no harmes.
But breke both her leggis *and* sithen her armes.

Thus Gamelyn *and* Adam wroght right fast.
And pleide with the monkis *and* made hem a-gast.
Thider' thei come rydyng' ioly with swaynes.
And home a-yen thei were lad in cartis *and* waynes./
Tho thei hadden alle y-doo. then seide a gray ffrere.
Alas sir' Abbot what dide we now here.
Tho that we comen hider/ it was a colde reede.
Vs hadde ben better' at home with water' *and* with breede.
While Gamelyn made ordris of monkis *and* frere.
Euyr' stood his brother' *and* made foule chere.
Gamelyn vp with his staf that he weⁿ knew. [leaf 51, back]
And girt' hym in the nek that he ouer threw.
A litⁱⁿ a-boue the girdiⁿ the rigge boon to-brast.
And sette hym in the feters ther' he satt arst.
Sitte there brother' seide Gamelyn.
ffor to colen thi body as I dide myn.
As swithe as thei haddyn wroken hem on her' foon.
Thei asked water' *and* waschen a-noon.
What some for her' loue *and* some for her' awe.
Alle the seruau*n*tis serueth hem of the best lawe.
¶ The Schereue was thenne but fyue myle.
And aⁱⁿ was tolde hym in a liteⁱⁿ while.
How Gamelyn *and* Adam haden doone a sory res.
Bounden *and* wounden men a-yens the kyngis pes.
Tho bi-gan sone strif for to wake.
And the Schireue a-boute Gamelyn for to take.
¶ Now lithe' *and* listneth so god yeue you good fyne.
And ye schuⁱⁿ here good game of yong Gamelyne.
ffoure *and* twenti yong' men that helden hem fuⁱⁿ bolde.
Come to the schireue *and* seide that thei wolde.
Gamelyn *and* Adam fette bi her' fay.
The Schirreue yeue hem leue soth for to say.
Thei hyeden fast wolde thei not lynne.
Tiⁱⁿ thei come to the gate there Gamelyn was ynne.
Thei knokkeden on the gate the porter' was nyghe.
And lokid out at an hole as man that was slighe.

The porter' had biholde hem a litull while.
He louyd well Gamelyn *and* was drad of gile.
And lete the wiket stond full stille.
And asked hem with-oute what was here wille.
¶ ffor alle the gret companye than spak but oon.
Vndo the gate porter' *and* lete vs yn goon.
Than seide the porter' so brouke I my chyn.
Ye schull saie your' erand yer' ye come yn.
Saie to Gamelyn *and* Adam yf theire will be
We will speke with hem two wordes or thre.
ffelaw seide the porter stonde there stille.
And I will wende to Gamelyn to wite his wille.
In wente the porter' to Gamelyn a-noon.
And seide sir' I warne you here be comen your' foon.
The Schereuys men ben atte the gate.
ffor to take you both schull ye not scape.
Porter' seide Gamelyn so mote I well the.
I will allow the thi wordis when I my tyme se.
Go a-geyn to the gate *and* dwelle with hem a while.
And thou schalt se right sone porter' a gile.
Adam seide Gamelyn loke the to gone.
We haue foo-men atte yate *and* frendis neuer one. [leaf 52]
Hit ben the Schereuys men that hider' ben come.
Thei be swore to-gider' that we schall be nome.
Gamelyn seide Adam hye the right blyue.
And if I faile the this day euyll mote I thryue.
And we schull so welcome the Schereuys men.
That some of hem schall make here beddis in the fen.
At a posterne gate Gamelyn out went.
And a good cartstaf in his honde hent.
Adam hent sone a nother' gret staf.
ffor to helpen Gamelyn *and* good strokis yaf.
Adam fell tweyne *and* Gamelyn fell thre.
The other' sette feet on erthe *and* bi-gan to fle.
What seide Adam so euyr' here I masse
I haue right good wyne drynke or ye passe.

Nay bi god seide thei thi drynke is not good.
It wolde make a mannes brayn to lyen in his hood.
Gamelyn stood stille *and* lokid hym a-boute.
And seide the schereue cometh with a gret route.
Adam seide Gamelyn what ben now thi redis.
Here cometh the schereue *and* wiłł haue our hedis.
Adam seide to Gamelyn myn rede is now this.
A-bide we no lenger lest we fare a-mys.
I rede that we to wode gone or that we be founde.
Better is there louse than in towne be bounde.
Adam toke bi the honde yong Gamelyne./
And euery of hem drank a draught of wyne./
And after token her cours *and* wenten her way.
Tho fonde the schereue nest but non ay.
The schereue light doun *and* wente in to halle.
And fonde the lorde feterid fast with alle.
The schereue vnfeterid hym right sone a-noon.
And sent aftir a leche to hele his rigge boon.
¶ Lete we now the fals knyght lie in his care.
And talke we of Gamelyn *and* loke how he fare.
Gamelyn in to the wode stalkid stille.
And Adam spenser liked this ille.
Adam swore to Gamelyn be seynt Richere.
Now I se it is mery to be a spensere.
That leuyr me were keies to bere.
Than walken in this wilde wode my clothis to tere.
Adam seide Gamelyn dismay the right nought.
Mony a good mannys childe in care is brought.
As thei stood talkyng bothen in fere.
Adam herde talkyng of men *and* nygh hem thought thei [were.
Tho Gamelyn vndir wode lokid a-right.
Seuyn score of yong men he sigh wełł dight.
Alle sate at the mete compas a-boute. [leaf 52, back]
Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no doute.
After bale cometh bote thorogh goddis myght.
Me thynke of mete *and* drynke I haue a sight.

Adam loked tho vndir' wode bough.
And tho he say mete *and* he was glad y-nough.
ffor he hoped to god to haue his dele.
And he was sore a-longed after' a good mele.
As he seide that worde the maister' outlawe.
Saugh Adam *and* Gamelyn vndir' wode schawe.
Yonge men seide the maister' bi the good rode.
I am war' of gestis god sende vs gode.
Yonde ben two yonge men well a-dight.
And per*auenture* ther' ben more who so lokid a-right.
A-riseth vp yong' men *and* fette hem to me.
It is good that we witen what men thei be.
Vp ther', stertyn seuene fro the dyner'.
And metten with Gamelyn *and* Adam spenser'.
Whan thei were nyghe hem than seide that one.
Yeldeth vp yonge men your' bowes *and* your' flone.
Than seide Gamelyn that yong was of elde.
Moche sorow mote thei haue that to you hem yelde.
I course non other' but right my selue.
Thei ye fette to you fyue than be ye twelue.
Tho thei herde bi his worde that myght was yn his arme.
Ther' was non of hem that wolde do hem harme.
But seide to Gamelyn myldely *and* stille.
Come a-fore our' maister' *and* say to hym thi wille.
Yonge men seide Gamelyn be your' lewte.
What man is your' maister' that ye with be.
Alle thei answerde with-oute lesynge.
Our' maister' is crowned of outlawis kynge.
Adam seide Gamelyn go we in cristes name.
He may neither' mete ne drynke werne vs for schame.
Yf that he be hende *and* come of gentill blood.
He will yeue vs mete *and* drynke *and* do vs some good.
Be seynt Iame seide Adam what harme that I gete.
I will auenture me that I had mete.
Gamelyn *and* Adam went forth in fere.
And thei grette the maister / that thei fonde there.

¶ Than seide the maister / kyng of outlawes.
What seke ye yonge men vndir' wode schawes.
Gamelyn answerde. the kyng with his crowne.
He most nedis walke in felde that may not walke in towne.
Sire we walke not here non harme to do.
But if we mete a deer' to schete ther'to.
As men that ben hungry *and* mow no mete fynde.
¶ And ben hard be-stad vndir' wode lynde. [leaf 53]
Of Gamelyn wordis the maister' had reuthe.
And seide ye schall haue y-nogh haue god my treuthe.
He bad hem sitte doun for to take reste.
And bad hem ete *and* drynke *and* that of the beste.
As thei eten *and* dronken well *and* fyne.
Than seide oon to a nother' this is Gamelyne.
Tho was the maister' outlawe in to counseile nome./
And tolde how it' was Gamelyn that thider' was come.
A-non as he herde how it was be-falle.
He made hym maister' vndir' hym ouer hem alle.
With-yn the thrid wike hym come tithyng'.
Tho the maister' outlawe that was her' kyng'.
That he schulde come home his pees was made.
And of that good tithyng' he was full glade.
Tho seide he to his yong' men soth for to telle.
Me ben comen tithynges I may no lenger' dwelle/.
Tho was Gamelyn a-non with-oute tariyng'.
Made maister' outlawe *and* crowned her' kyng'.
Tho was Gamelyn crowned kyng of outlawes.
And walkid a while vndir' wode schawes.
¶ The fals knyght his brother' was schereue *and* sire.
And lete his brother' endite for hate *and* for hire.
Tho were his bonde-men sory *and* no thyng' glade.
When Gamelyn her' lorde wolfes heed was cried *and* made.
And sent out of his men where thei myght hym fynde.
ffor to go seke Gamelyn vndir' wode lynde.
To telle hym tithyng the wynde was went.
All his good reuyd *and* alle his men schent.

Whan thei hadden hym founde on knees thei hem setten.
And a-doun with here hood *and* her lorde gretten.
Sir wrath yow nought for the good rode.
ffor we han brought you tithyng but thei be not gode.
Now is thi brother schereue *and* hath the baillie.
And hath endited the *and* wolfes heed doth the crie.
Allas seide Gamelyn that euer I was so slak.
That I ne had broke his nekke tho I his rigge brak.
Goth greteth well boþe/ housbonde/ *and* wif.
I will be at the next schire haue god my lyf.
Gamelyn cam redy to the next schire.
And ther was his brother both lorde *and* sire.
Gamelyn boldely come in to the mote halle.
And put a-doun his hood amonge the lordis alle.
God saue you lordynges that here be.
But broke bak schereue euyll mote thou the.
Whi hast thou do me that schame *and* vilonye.
ffor to late endite me *and* wolfesheed do me crie./
Tho thought the fals knyght for to ben a-wreke. [leaf 53, back]
And let Gamelyn most he no thyng speke.
Might ther be no grace but Gamelyn at the last.
Was cast in prison *and* feterid fast./
Gamelyn hath a brother/ that hight sir Ote.
As a good a knyght *and* hende as myght gon on fote.
A-non yede a messager to that good knyght.
And tolde hym all to-gider how Gamelyn was dight.
A-non as sire Ote herde how Gamelyn was dight.
He was right sory was he no thyng light.
And lete sadill a stede *and* the way he name.
And to his tweie bretheryn right sone he came.
Sire seide sir Ote to the schereue tho.
We ben but thre bretheren schull we neuer be mo.
And thou hast prisoned the best of vs alle.
Suche a nother brother euyll mote hym bi-falle.
Sir Ote seide the fals knyght late be thi curs/.
By god for thi wordis he schall fare the wurs.

To the kyngis prison he is y-nome.
And there he schall a-bide till the iustice come.
Parde seide sir' Ote bettir' it schall be.
I bid hym to maympris that thou graunte me.
Till the next sittyng of delyueraunce.
And late than Gamelyn stonde to his chaunce.
Brother' in suche a forwarde I take hym to the.
And by my fadris soule that the bigat *and* me.
But he be redy whan the iustice sitte./
Thou schalt bere the iugement for all thi gret witte.
I graunte well seide sir' Ote that it so be.
Late delyuer' hym a-non *and* take hym to me.
Tho was Gamelyn delyuered to sir' Ote his brother'.
And that nyght dwellid the oon with the other'.
On the morowen seide Gamelyn to sir' Ote the hende.
Brother' he seide I mote for sothe fro you wende.
To loke how my yong men leden here lyf.
Whethir' thei lyuen in ioy or ellis in strif.
By god seide sir' Ote that is a colde rede.
Now I see that alle the carke schall fall on my hede.
ffor whan the Iustice sitte *and* thou be not founde.
I schall a-non be take *and* in thi stede y-bounde.
Brother' seide Gamelyn dismaie the noght.
ffor bi seynt Iame in Galis that mony man hath soght.
Yf that god Almyghty holde me my lyf *and* my witte.
I will be redy whan the iustice sitte.
Than seide sir' Ote to Gamelyn god schilde the fro schame.
Come when thou seist tyme *and* bryng' vs oute of blame..
Litheth *and* listneth *and* hold yow stille./
And ye schull here how Gamelyn had his wille. [leaf 54]
Gamelyn wente vndir' wode rys.
And fonde ther plaiyng yong' men of prys.
Tho was yong' Gamelyn right glad y-noghe.
When he fonde his men vndir' wode boghe.
Gamelyn *and* his men talkeden in fere.
And thei had good game here maister' to here.

His men tolde hym of auenturis that thei had founde.
And Gamelyn hem tolde a-yen how he was fast bounde.
While Gamelyn was outlawe had he no cors.
Ther' was no man that for hym ferde the wors.
But Abbotis *and* priours monk *and* Chanon.
On hem left he noght when he myght hem nome.
While Gamelyn *and* his men made myrthes ryue.
The fals knyght his brother' euyll mote he þryue.
ffor he was fast a-boute bothe day *and* other.
ffor to hire the quest' to hangen his brother/
¶ Gamelyn stood on a day *and* behelde.
The wodis *and* the schawis *and* the wilde filde.
He thought on his brother' how he hym be-hette.
That he wolde be redy whan the iustice sette.
He thought well he wolde with-oute delay.
Come a-fore the iustice to kepen his day.
And seide to his yong men dighteth you yare.
ffor whan the iustice sitte we moste be thare.
ffor I am vndir' borow till that I come.
And my brother' for me to prison schall be nome.
Be seynt Iame seide his yong men *and* thou rede therto.
Ordeyne how it' schall be *and* it schall be do.
While Gamelyn was comyng ther' the iustice satte.
The fals knyght his brother' for-yate he not that.
To hire the men on his quest to hangen his brother'.
Thogh thei had not the oon thei wolde haue the other'.
Tho come Gamelyn fro vndir' the wode rys.
And broght with hym yong' men of prys.
I se well seide Gamelyn the Iustice is sette.
Go a-forn Adam *and* loke how it spette.
Adam went in to the halle *and* loked all a-boute.
He sigh ther' stonde lordis grete *and* stoute.
And sir' Ote his brother' feterid full faste.
Tho went Adam oute of halle as he were a-gaste.
Adam seide to Gamelyn *and* to his felawis alle.
Sir' Ote stant feterid in the mote halle./

[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Yf god yeue vs grace well for to do.
He schall it a-bigge that it brought ther'-to.
Than seide Adam that lokkes had hore./
Cristes curs mote he haue that hym bond so sore.
And thou wilt' Gamelyn do aftir' my rede. [leaf 51, back]
Ther' is non in the halle schall bere a-wey his hede.
Adam seide Gamelyn we will not do so.
We will sle the giltif *and* late the other' go.
I will in to the halle *and* with the Iustice speke.
On hem that ben giltif I will ben a-wreke.
Lete non scape at the dore take yong men yeme
ffor I will be Iustice this day domes to deme.
God spede me this day at my newe werke.
Adam come with me for thou schalt be my clerke.
His men vnswareden hym *and* bad hym done his beste.
And if thou to vs haue nede thou schalt fynde vs preste.
We will stonde with the while that we may dure.
And but we wirken manly pay vs non hure.
Yonge men seide Gamelyn so mote I well the./
As trusti a maister' ye schall fynde me.
Right there the Iustice satte in the halle
In went Gamelyn amongis hem alle.
Gamelyn lete vnfeter his brother' out of bende.
Than seide sir' Ote his brother' that was hende.
Thou haddist almost Gamelyn dwellid to longe.
ffor the quest is oute on me that I schulde be honge.
Brother / seide Gamelyn so god yeue me good rest.
This day thei schull ben hanged that ben on the quest.
And the Iustice bothe that is the Iuge man.
And the schereue bothe thorgh hym it be-gan.
¶ Than seide Gamelyn to the Iustice.
Now is thi power' done thou most nedis rise.
Thou hast yeuyn domyb that ben yuell dight.
I will sitten in thi sete *and* dressen hem a-right'.

The Iustice sate stille *and* ros not a-non.
And Gamelyn in haste cleuyd his cheke bon.
Gamelyn toke hym in his armys *and* no more spak.
But threw him ou*er* the barre *and* his arme brak.
Durst non to Gamelyn saie but good.
ffor ferd of the companye that with hym oute stood.
Gamelyn sette hym dou*n* in the Iustice sete.
And sir' Ote his brother' bi hym *and* Adam at his fete.
Whan Gamelyn was sette in the Iustice stide.
Herken of a bourde that Gamelyn dide.
He lete feter' the Iustice *and* his fals brother/
And lete hem come to the barre that oon with that other/./
Tho Gamelyn had thus done had he no rest.
Till he had enquerid who was on the quest.
ffor to demyn his brother' sir' Ote for to honge.
Er' he wiste whiche thei were hym thoght full longe.
But as sone as Gamelyn wiste where thei were.
He dide hem eu*er*ychon feter' in fere. [leaf 55]
And bryngen hem to the barre *and* setten hem in rewe.
Be my feith seide the Iustice the schereue is a schrewe.
Than seide Gamelyn to the Iustice.
Thou hast yeue domes of the worste assise.
And the .xij. sisouris that weren on the quest.
They schull be hangid this day so haue I good rest.
Than seide the schereue to yong Gamelyn.
Lorde I crie the mercy brother' art thou myn.
Therfore seide Gamelyn haue thou cristes curs.
ffor *and* thou were mayster' yet schulde I haue wurs.
ffor to make schort tale *and* noght to longe.
He ordeyned hym a quest of his men so stronge.
The Iustice and the schereue bothe hangid hye.
To weyuen with the ropis *and* with the wynde drye.
And the .xij. sisou*r*s sorw haue that rekke.
Alle thei were hangid fast bi the nekke.
¶ Thus endid the fals knyght with his trechery.
That euyr' had lad his lif in falsnes *and* foly.

He was hanged bi the nekkē *and* nōt bi the purs.
That was the mede that he had for his fādirs curs.
Sir' Otes was eldist *and* Gamelyn was yong.
Wenten to here frendis *and* passēdyn to the kyng.
Thei maden pees with the kyng of the best sise.
The kyng' loued well sir' Ote *and* made hym Iustice.
And after' the kyng made Gamelyn in Este *and* in west.
Chief Iustice of his fre forest.
Alle his wight yong men the kyng for-yaf here gilt.
And sithen in good office the kyng hath alle hem pilt.
¶ Thus wan Gamelyn his londe *and* his ledē.
And wreke hym on hys enemyes *and* quyt hem here mede.
And sir' Ote his brother' made hym his heier'./
And sithen weddid Gamelyn a wif good *and* feier'.
Thei lyueden to-gider / while that crist wolde.
And sithen was Gamelyn grauen vndir' molde.
And so schall we alle may ther' no man fle.
God bryng vs to the ioy that euyr' schall be.
here endith the Cokis tale./

GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

HENGWRT MS.

¶. Here bigynneth the prologe of the tale of the Wyf of Bathe. [leaf 88]

Experience / thogh noon Auctoritee
Were in this world / is right ynogh for me
To speke of wo / that is in mariage
ffor lordynges / sith þat I twelf yeer was of age
Thonked be god / that is eterne on lyue.
Housbondes atte chirche dore / I haue had fyue
If I so ofte / myghte han wedded be
And alle were worthy men / in hir degree
But me was told certeyn / noght longe agon is
That sith þat Crist ne wente neuere but onys
To weddyng in the Cane of Galilee
That by the same ensample / taughte he me
That I ne sholde / wedded be but ones
¶ Herke eek / lo / which a sharp word for the nones
Bisyde a welle / Ihesus / god and man
Spak / in repreeue of the Samaritan
¶ Thow hast yhad / fyue housbondes quod he
And that ilke man / which that now hath thee
Is nat thyn housbonde / thus he seyde certeyn.
What þat he mente ther-by / I kan nat seyn
But þat I axe / why þat the fifthe man
Was noon housbonde / to the Samaritan
How manye / myghte she han in mariage
Yet herde I neuere / tellen in myn age

Vp-on this nombre / diffynycioun
Men may dyuyne / and glosen vp & doun
But wel I woot expres / with-outen lye
God bad vs / for to wexe and multiplye
That gentil text kan I wel vnderstonde
¶ Eek wel I woot he seyde þat myn housbonde
Sholde lete / fader and moder/ and take to me
But of no nombre / mencion made he
Of Bigamye / or of Octogamye
Why sholde men thanne / speke of it vileynye
¶ Lo here / the wise kyng Dann Salomon
I trowe / he hadde wyues many oon
As wolde god / it leueful were to me [leaf 58, back]
To be refresshed / half so ofte as he
Which yifte of god hadde he / for alle hise wyuys
No man hath swich / that in this world alyue is
God woot this noble kyng as to my wit
The firste nyght hadde many a murye fit
With ech of hem / so wel was hym on lyue
Blessed be god / that I haue wedded fyue
Wel come the sixte / whan þat euere he shal
ffor sith I wol nat kepe me / chaast in al
Whan myn housbonde / is fro the world agon
Som cristen man / shal wedde me anon
ffor thanne thapostle seith / þat I am free
To wedde a goddes half / where it liketh me
He seith / that to be wedded is no synne
Bet is to be wedded / than to brynne
What rekketh me / theigh folk/ seye vileynye
Of shrewed Lameth / and his bigamye
I woot wel / Abraham was an holy man
And Iacob eek as fer as euere I kan
And ech of hem / hadde wyues mo than two
And many another / holy man also
¶ Where kan ye seye / in any maner age
That heighe god / defended mariage

By expres word / I pray yow telleth me
Or where comanded he virgynytee
I woot as wel as ye / it is no drede
Thapostle / whan he speketh of maydenhede
He seyde / that precept ther-of / hadde he noon
Men may conseille a womman / to be oon
But conseillyng' nys no comandement'
He put it' in oure owene Iuggement'
ffor hadde god / comanded maydenhede
Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng' with the dede
And certes / if ther were no seed ysowe
Virgynytee thanne / wher-of sholde it growe
Poul dorste nat comanden / at the leeste
A thyng' of which / his mayster yaf noon heeste
The dart/ is set vp for virgynytee
Cacche who so may / who renneth best lat se
But this word / is noght take of euery wight' [leaf 59]
But ther as god / list yeue it of his myght'
I woot wel / that thapostle was a mayde
But nathelees / thogh þat he wroot' or sayde
He wolde / that euery wight' were swich as he
Al nys but conseil / to virgynytee
And for to been a wyf / he yaf me leue
Of Indulgence / so nys it no repreue
To wedde me / if that my make dye
With-outen excepcioñ of bigamye
Al were it good / no womman for to touche
He mente / as in his bed / or in his couche
ffor peril is / bothe fyr and tow tassemble
Ye knowe / what this ensample may resemble
This al and som / he heeld virgynytee
Moore parfit' than weddyng in freletee
ffreletee clepe I / but if þat he and she
Wolde leden / al hir lyf' in chastitee
I graunte it wel / I haue noon enuye
Thogh maydenhede / preferre bigamye

It liketh hem to be clene / in body and goost'
Of myn estat' ne wol I make no boost'
ffor wel ye knowe / a lord in his houshold
Ne hath nat euery vessel / al of gold
Somme been of tree / and doon hir lord seruyse
God clepeth folk to hym / in sondry wyse
And euerich / hath of god a propre yifte
Som this / som that' as hym liketh shifte
Virgynytee / is greet perfeccioñ
And continence eek' with deuocioñ
But Crist' that of perfeccion / is welle
Bad nat euery wight' he sholde go selle
Al that he hadde / and yeue it to the poore
And in swich wise / folwe hym and his foore
He spak to hem / that wol lyue parfitly
And lordynges / by youre leue / that am nat I
I wol bistowe / the flour of al myn age
In thactes / and in fruyt of mariage
¶ Telle me also / to what conclusioñ quæstio!
Were membres maad / of generacioñ
And of so parfit' wys a wight ywroght / [leaf 59, back]
Trusteth right wel / they were nat maad for noght'
Glose who so wole / and seye bothe vp and doun
That they were maad / for purgacioun
Of Vryne / and oure bothe thynges smale
Was eek to knowe / a femelle/ from a male
And for noon oother cause / sey ye / no?
Thexperience / woot wel it is noght so
So that the Clerkes / be nat with me wrothe
I sey this / þat they maked been for bothe
That is to seyn / for office and for ese
Of engendrure / ther we nat god displese
Why sholde men ellis / in hir bokes sette
That man shal yelde / to his wyf hir dette
Now wherwith / sholde he make his paiement
If he ne vsed / his sely Instrument'

Thanne were they maad / vp-on a creature
To purge vryne / and eek for engendrure
¶ But I seye noght þat euery wight is holde
That hath swich harneys / as I to yow tolde
To goon / and vsen hem in engendrure
Thanne sholde men take / of Chastitee no cure
Crist was a maydo / and shapen as a man
And many a Seynt sith that the world bigan
yet lyued they euere / in parfit Chastitee
I nyl envie / no virgynytee
Lat hem be breed / of pured whete seed
And lat us wyues / hote Barlybreed
And yet with Barlybreed / Mark telle kan
Oure lord Ihesu / refresshed many a man
In swich estat as god hath clepyd vs
I wol persuere / I nam nat precius
In wifhode / wol I vse myn Instrument
As frely / as my makere hath it sent
If I be daungerous / god yeue me sorwe
Myn housbonde / shal it han / bothe eue and morwe
Whan that hym list com forth and paye his dette
And housbonde / wol I haue / I wol nat lette
Which shal be / bothe / my dettour and my thral
And haue / his tribulacion / with-al
Vp-on his flessh / whil that I am his wyf [leaf 60]
I haue the power / duryng al my lyf
Vp-on his propre body / and nat he
Right thus / thapostle / tolde it vn-to me
And bad oure housbondes / for to loue vs wel
Al this sentence / me liketh euery del
Vp stirte the Pardoner / and that anon
Now dame quod he / by god and by Seint Iohn
Ye been a noble Prechour / in this cas
I was aboute / to wedde a wyf allas
What sholde I bye it / on my flessh so deere
Yet hadde I leuere / wedde no wyf to yeere

¶ Abyd quod she / my tale is nat bigonne
Nay / thow shalt drynken / of another tonne
Er þat I go / shal sauoure wors than Ale
And whan that I / haue toold thee forth my tale
Of tribulacion / in maryage
Of which I am expert in al myn age
This is to seye / my self hath been the whippe
Thanne maystow / chese / wheither þat thow wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne / that I shal abroche
Be war of it / er thow to neigh approche
ffor I shal telle ensamples / mo than ten
Who so þat nyle / be war/ by othere men
By hym / shal othere men corrected be
Thise same wordes / writeth Protholome
Rede in his Almageste / and take it there
¶ Dame I wolde pray yow / if youre wyl it were
Seyde this Pardoner / as ye bigan
Telle forth youre tale / spareth for no man
And techeth vs yonge men / of youre praktyke
¶ Gladly quod she / syn it may yow lyke
But that I praye / to al this compaignye
If that I speke / after my fantasye
As taketh nat agrief / of that I seye
ffor myn entente / nys but for to pleye
Now sire / thanne wol I telle yow forth my tale
As euere / moot I drynke / wyn or Ale
I shal seye sooth / tho housbondes þat I hadde
As three of hem were goode / and two were badde
The thre men / were goode / and ryche / and olde [leaf 60, back]
Vnnethe myghte they / the Statut holde
In which / that they were bounden vn-to me
Ye woot wel / what I mene of this pardee
As help me god / I laughe whan I thynke
How pitously / a nyght I made hem swynke
And by my fey / I tolde of it no stoor
They hadde me yeuen / hir land and hir tresoor

Me neded nat' do lenger diligence
To wynne hir loue / or doon hem reuerence
They loued me so wel / by god aboue
That I ne tolde / no deyntee of hir loue
A wys womman / wol bisye hire / euere in oon
To gete hir loue / ye ther as she hath noon
But sith I hadde hem / hoolly in myn hond
And sith that they / hadde yeuen me al hir lond
What sholde I take kepe / hem for to plese
But it were / for my profit' and myn ese
I sette hem awerk' by my fey
That many a nyght' they songen weylawey
The bacon / was nat fet for hem I trowe
That som men han / in Essexe at Donmowe
I gouerned hem / so wel after my lawe
That ech of hem / ful blisful was and fawe
To brynge me / gaye thynges fro the ffeyre
They were ful glad / whan I spak to hem feyre
ffor god it woot' I chidde hem spitously
¶ Now herkneth / how I bar me proprely
ye wise wyues / that konne vnderstonde
Thus sholde ye speke / and bere hem wrong on honde
ffor half so boldely / kan ther no man
Swere and lye / as a womman kan
I sey nat this / by wyues þat ben wyse
But if it be / whan they hem mysauyse
A wys wyf / if that she kan hir good
Shal bere hym an hond / the Cow is wood
And take witnesse / of hir owene mayde
Of hire assent' but herkneth how I sayde
¶ Sire olde kaynard / is this thyn array
Why is / my Neghebores wyf so gay
She is honoured / ouer al ther she goth [leaf 61]
I sitte at hoom / I haue no thrifty cloth
What dostow / at my neghebores hous
Is she so fair / artow so amorous

What rowne ye with oure mayde / benedicite
Sire olde lechour / lat thy Iapes be
And if I haue / a gossib / or A freend
With-outen gilt ye chiden as a feend
If that I walke / or pleye vn-to his hous
Thow comest hoom / as dronken as a mous
And prechest on thy bench / with yuel preef
Thow seyst to me / it is a greet meschief
To wedde a poure womman / for costage
And if that she be ryche / of heigh parage
Thanne seistow / that it is a tormentrye
To suffre / hir pryde / and hir malencolye
And if þat she be fair / thow verray knaue
Thow seist that euery holour wol hire haue
She may no while / in chastitee abyde
That is assayled / vp-on ech a syde
¶ Thow seyst som folk/ desiren vs for richesse
Somme for oure shape / and somme for oure fairnesse
And somme / for she kan outher syngo / or daunce
And somme / for gentillesse / and dalyaunce
Somme for hir handes / and hir armes smale
Thus goth al to the deuel / by thy tale
Thow seyst/ men may nat kepe a Castel wal
It may so longe / assaylled been ouer al
And if that she be foul / thow seyst þat she
Coueiteth euery man / that she may se
ffor as a Spaynel / she wol on hym lepe
Til that she fynde / som man hir to chepe
Ne noon so grey goos / goth ther in the lake
As seistow / wol be with-oute make
And seyst it is an hard thyng/ for to wolde
A thyng/ that no man wol his thankes holde
Thus seistow lorel / whan thow goost to beddo
And that no wys man / nedeth for to weddo
Ne no man / that entendeth vn-to heuene
With wilde thonder dynt and firy leuene

Moote thy welked nekke / be to-broke . [leaf 61, back]
Thow seyst' that droppyng houses / and eek smoke
And chidyng wyues / maken men to flee
Out of hir owene houses / a benedicitee!
What eyleth / swich an old man for to chide
Thow seyst' we wyues / wil oure vices hyde
Til we be fast/ and thanne we wol hem shewe
Wel may that be / a prouerbe of a shrewe
Thow seist' þat Oxen / Asses / hors / and houndes
They been assayed / at dyuerse stoundes
Bacynes / lauours / er that men hem bye
Spoones / stooles / and al swich housbondrye
And so be pottes / clothes / and array
But folk/ of wyues / maken noon assay
Til they be wedded / olde dotard shrewe
And thanne seistow / we wil oure vices shewe
Thow seist also / that it displeseth me
But if that thow / wolt preise my beautee
And but thow powre / alwey vp-on my face
And clepe me faire dame / in euery place
And but thow make a feeste / on thilke day
That I was born / and make me fressh and gay
And but thow do / to my norice honour
And to my chambrere / with-Inne my bour
And to my fadres folk / and his allyes
Thus seistow / olde barel ful of lyes
And yet' of oure Apprentice / Iankyn
ffor his crispe heer / shynyng' as gold so fyn
And for he squyereth me / bothe vp and doun
Yet hastow caught' fals suspecioun
I wil hym nat' thogh thow were deed to morwe
¶ But tel me this / why hidestow with sorwe
The keyes of thy Cheste / awey fro me
It is my good / as wel as thyn pardee
What wenestow / make an ydiote of oure dame
Now by that lord / that called is Seint Iame

Thow shalt noght bothe / thogh þat thow were wood
Be maister / of my body / and my good
That oon thow shalt forgo / maugree thyne eyen
What helpeth it' of me enquére and spyen
I trowe / thow woldest' lok me in thy chiste [leaf 62]
Thow sholdest seye / wyf/ go wher thee liste
Taak youre disport' I nyl leue no talis
I knowe yow / for a trewe wyf/ Dame Alis
We loue no man / that taketh kepe / or charge
Wher þat we goon / we wol been at oure large
Of alle men / yblessed moote he be
The wise Astrologen / Daun Protholome
That seith this prouerbe / in his Almageste
Of alle men / his wisdom is hyeste
That rekketh nat' who hath the world in hond
By this prouerbe / thow shalt vnderstonde
Haue thow ynogh / what thar thee rekke / or care
How myrily / that othere folkes fare
ffor certes / olde dotard / by youre leue
Ye shal han queynte / right ynogh at eue
He is to greet a nygard / that wil werne
A man to lighte a candle / at his lanterne
He shal han / neuer the lasse light pardee
Haue thow ynogh / thee thar nat pleyne thee
¶ Thow seist also / that if we make vs gay
With clothyng' and with precious array
That it is peril / of oure chastitee
And yet with sorwe / thow most enforce thee
And seye thise wordes / in thapostles name
In habit' maad with chastitee and shame
Ye wommen / shal apparaille yow quod he
And nat in tressed heer / and gay perree
As perlys / ne with gold / ne clothes ryche
After thy text' ne after thy rubryche
I wol nat werke / as muche / as is a gnat'
Thow seydest this / þat I was lyk a Cat'

ffor who so wolde senge / a Cattes skyn
Thanne wolde the Cat' wel dwellen in his In
And if the Cattes skyn / be slyk' and gay
She wol nat dwelle in house / half a day
But forth she wole / er any day be dawed
To shewe hir skyn / and goon a Caterwawed
This is to seye / if I be gay sire shrewe
I wol renne out' my borel for to shewe
Sire olde fool / what helpeth thee tespyen [leaf 62, back]
Thogh thow preye Argus / with his hundred eyen
To be my wardecorps / as he kan best
In feith / he shal nat kepe me / but me lest
Yet koude I make his berd / as mote I thee
¶ Thow seydest eek' þat ther ben thynges three
The whiche thynges / troublen al this erthe
And that no wight' may endure the ferthe
O lecue sire shrewe / Ihesu shorte thy lyf
Yet prechestow / and seist an hateful wyf
Yrekened is / for oon of thise myschaunces
Been ther / noone othere resemblaunces
That ye may likne / youre parables to
But if a sely wyf' be oon of tho
¶ Thow liknest eek / wommanes loue to helle
To bareyne lond / ther water may nat dwelle
Thow liknest it also / to wilde fyr
The moore it brenneth / the moore it hath desyr
To consumen euery thyng' þat brent wol be
Thow seist' right as wormes shende a tree
Right so a wyf / destroyeth hir housbonde
This knowen they / that been to wyues bonde
¶ Lordynges / right thus / as ye han vnderstonde
Bar I stifly / myne olde housbondes on honde
That thus they seyden / in hir dronkenesse
And al was fals / but that I took witnesse
On Iankyn / and on my Nece also
O lord / the pyne I dide hem / and the wo

fful giltlees / by goddes swete pyne
ffor as an hors / I koude byte and whyne
I koude pleyne / and I was in the gilt
Or ellis / often tyme / I hadde been spilt'
Who so that first to Mille comth / first grynt'
I pleyned first' so was oure werre stynt'
They were ful glad / to excusen hem ful blyue
Of thyng' of which they neuere agilte hir lyue
Of wenches / wolde I bern hem on honde
Whan that for syk' they myghte vnnethe stonde
Yet tikled I his herte / for that he
Wende that I hadde had of hym / so greet chiertee
I swoor / that my walkyng' out by nyghte [leaf 63]
Was for to espye / wenches that he dighte
Vnder that colour / hadde I many a myrthe
ffor al swich wit' is yeuen vs in oure birthe
Deceite / wepyng' spynnyng' god hath yeue
To wommen kyndely / whil they may lyue
And thus / of o thyng' I auante me
At ende / I hadde the bet in ech degree
By sleighte / or force / or by som maner thyng'
As by continuel murmur / or grucchyng'
Namely abedde / hadden they meschaunce
Ther wolde I chide / and do hem no plesaunce
I wolde no lenger / in the bed abyde
If that I felte his arm / ouer my syde
Til he hadde maad / his raunceon vn-to me
Thanne wolde I suffre hym / do his nycetee
And ther-fore / euery man / this tale I telle
Wynne who so may / for al is for to selle
With empty hond / men may none haukes lure
ffor wynnyng' wolde I al his lust endure
And make me / a feyned appetit'
And yet in bacon / hadde I neuere delit
That made me / that euere I wolde hem chyde
For thogh the Pope / hadde seten hem bisyde

I wolde noght spare hem / at hir owene bord
ffor by my trouthe / I quytte hem / word for word
As help me / verray god omnipotent
Togh I right now / sholde make my testament
I ne owe hem nat a word / that it nys quyt
I broghte it so aboute / by my wit
That they moste yeue it vp / as for the beste
Or ellis / hadde we neuere been in reste
ffor thogh he looked / as a wood leoñ
yet sholde he faille / of his conclusioñ
¶ Thanne wolde I seye / good lief taak keepe
How mekely / looketh Wilkyn oure scheepe
Com neer my spouse / lat me ba thy cheke
Ye sholden be / al pacient/ and meke
And han / a swete spyced conscience
Sith ye so preche / of Iobes pacience
Suffreth alwey / syn ye so wel kan preche [leaf 63, back]
And but ye do / certeyn we shal yow teche
That it is fair / to han a wyf in pees
Oon of vs two / moste bowen doutelees
And sith a man / is moore resonable
Than womman is / ye mosten been suffrable
What eyleth yow / to grucche thus and grone
Is it for ye wolde haue / my queynte allone
Wy taak it al / lo haue it euery del
Peter I shrewe yow / but ye loue it wel
ffor if I wolde selle / my bele chose
I koude walke / as fressh as is a rose
But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth
Ye be to blame / by god I sey yow sooth
Swiche manere wordes / hadde we on honde
Now wol I speke / of my ferthe housbonde
My ferthe housbonde / was a reuelour
This is to seyn he hadde a paramour
And I was yong and ful of ragerye
Stibourne and strong and ioly as a pye

How koude I daunce / to an harpe smale
And synge ywys / as any nyghtyngale
Whan I hadde dronke / a draghte of swete wyn
Metellyus / the foule cherl the swyn
That with a staf / birafte his wyf hir lyf
ffor she drank' wyn /. though I hadde been his wyf
Ne sholde nat' han daunted me fro drynke
And after wyn / on Venus moste I thynke
ffor also siker / as coold engendreth hayl
A likerous mouth / moste han a likerous tayl
In womman vynolent / is no defence
This knowen lechours / by experience
But lord crist' whan þat it remembreth me
Vp-on my youthe / and on my iolytee
It tikeleth me / aboute myn herte roote
Vn-to this day / it dooth myn herte boote
That I haue had my world / as in my tyme
But age allas / that al wole enuenyme
Hath me birafte my beautee / and my pith
Lat go farwel / the deuel go ther-with
The flour is goon / ther is namoore to telle [leaf 64]
The bren as I best kan / now moste I selle
But yet' to be right murye / wol I fonde
Now wol I tellen / of my ferthe housbonde
¶ I seye I hadde in herte gret despit
That he / of any oother had delit
But he was quyt' by god and by Seint Ioce
I made hym / of the same wode a troce
Nat of my body / in no foul manere
But certeynly / I made folk swich chiere
That in his owene grece / I made hym frye
ffor angre / and for verray Ialousye
By god / in erthe / I was his purgatorie
ffor which I hope / his soule be in glorie
ffor god it woot' he sat ful ofte and soong'
Whan þat his shoo / ful bitterly hym wroong'

Ther was no wight/ saue god and he / þat wiste
In many wise / how soore I hym twiste
He deyde / whan I cam fro Ierusalem
And lyth ygraue / vnder the roode beem
Al is his toumbe / noght so curyus
As was the sepulcre / of hym Daryus
Which that Appellus / wroghte subtilly
It nys but wast to burye hym preciously
Lat hym fare wel / god gyue his soule reste
He is now / in his graue / and in his cheste
Now / of my fifthe housbonde / wol I telle
God lat his soule / neuere come in helle
And yet was he to me / the mooste shrewe
That feele I / on my rybbes al by rewe
And euere shal / vn-to myn endyng day
But in oure bed / he was so fressh and gay
And ther with al / so wel koude he me glose
Whan that he wolde / han my bele chose
That thogh he hadde me bet on euery bon
He koude wynne agayn / my loue anon
I trowe I loued hym best for that he
Was of his loue / daungerous to me
We wommen han / if that I shal nat lye
In this matere / a queynte fantasye
Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly haue [leaf 64, back]
Ther after / wol we crye al day / and craue
fforbede vs thyng and that desiren we
Preesse on vs faste / and thanne wol we fle
With daunger / oute we / al oure chaffare
Greet prees at Market / maketh deere ware
And to greet cheepe / is holden at litel prys
This knoweth euery womman / that is wys
¶ My fifthe housbonde / god his soule blesse
Which þat I took for loue / and no rychesse
He som tyme / was a clerk of Oxenford
And hadde laft scole / and wente at hom to bord

With my gossyb / dwellyng in oure town
God haue hir soule / hir name was Alisoun
She knew myn herte / and eek my pryuetee
Bet than oure parysshe preest' as mote I thee
To hire biwreyed I / my conseil al
ffor hadde myn housbonde / pissed on a wal
Or doon a thyng' / that sholde haue cost his lyf
To hire / and to another worthy wyf
And to my Nece / which þat I loued wel
I wolde han toold / his conseil euery del
And so I dide / ful often / god it woot'
That made his face / often reed and hoot
ffor verray shame / and blamed hym self' for he
Hadde toold to me / so greet a pryuetee
¶ And so bifel / that ones in a lente
So often tymes / I to my gossyb wente
ffor euere yet' I louede to be gay
And for to walke / in March / Auerylle / and May
ffrom hous to hous / to here sondry tales
That Iankyn Clerk/ and my gossyb dame Alys
And I my self / in to the feeldes wente
Myn housbonde was at londoñ / al that lente
I hadde / the bettre leyser for to pleye
And for to se / and eek for to be seye
Of lusty folk' what wiste I wher my *grace*
Was shapen for to be / or in what place
Ther-fore / I made my visitacions
To Vigilies / and to processions
To *pre*chyng' eek / and to thise pilgrymages [leaf 65]
To pleyes of myracles / and to mariages
And wered vp on / my gaye scarlet gytes
Thise wormes / ne thise moththes / ne thise Mytes
Vp-on my peril / frete hem neuer a del
And wostow / why / for they were vsed wel
¶ Now wol I tellen forth / what happed me
I seye / that in the feeldes walked we

Til trewely / we hadde swich daliaunce
This clerk/ and I / that of my *pu*rueiaunce
I spak to hym / and seyde hym / how that he
If I were wydewe / sholde wedde me
ffor certeynly / I seye for no bobaunce
Yet was I neuere / with-outen purueiaunce
Of mariage / nof othere thynges eek /
I holde a mouses herte / noght worth a leek
That hath but oon hole / for to sterte to
And if that faille / thanne is al y-do
[I bar hi*m* on honde / he had enchaunted me
My Dame taught me / that sotilte
And eke I seide / I mette of hi*m* al nyght
He wold han slayn me / as I lay vp right
And al my bed / was ful of verray blod
But 3et I hope / that 3e shuln do me good
ffor blod bytokeneth gold / as me was taught
And al was fals / I dremed of it right nought
But as I folwed ay / my dames loore
As wel of that / as of othere thynges more.]
But now sire / lat me se / what shal I seyn
A .ha. by god / I haue my tale ageyn
¶ Whan that my fourthe housbonde / was a beere
I weep algate / and made sory cheere
As wyues mooten / for it is vsage
And with my cou*er*chief / couered my visage
But for that I was / purueyed of a make
I wepte but smal / and that I vndertake
¶ To chirche was myn housbonde / born a morwe
With neghebores / that for hym maden sorwe
And Iankyn oure clerk / was oon of tho
As help me god / whan that I saw hym go
After the beere / me thoughte he hadde a payre
Of legges and of feet so clene and fayre
That al myn herte / I gaf vn-to his hoold
He was I trowe / twenty wynter oold

[Camb. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, *leaf* 73, *back, line* 21] [*Not in B. M. Addit.* 5140, *lf* 96; *or Harl.* 7335, *lf* 68, *bk*; *or Harl.* 1758, *lf* 95; *or Sloane* 1685, *lf* 110, *bk*; *MS Reg.* 18 *C ii*, *lf* 112; *Sloane* 1686, *lf* 127, *bk*; (*Preamble not in Harl.* 1239; *Pr. and Tale not in Shirley's Harl.* 7333;) *not in Camb. Univ. MS Mm* 2. 5.]

[Camb. Dd. 4. 24 *extract stops*]

And I was fourty / if I shal seye sooth
But yit I hadde alwey / a coltes tooth
Gat tothed I was / & that bicam me weel.
I hadde the preente / of Seynt Venus seel. 604
As help me god I was a lusty oon
And fayr/ and ryche / and yong and wel bigoon
And trewely / as myne housbondes tolde me [leaf 65, back]
I hadde the beste quonyam / myghte be. 608
[ffor certes I am / al Venerien [Cambr. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, lf 74, line 6]
In feelyng / and myn hert is Marcien [Not in Addit. 5140, lf 96, bk; or Harl. 7335, lf 69; or Sloane 1685, lf 111; MS Reg. 18 C ii, lf 112, bk; Sloane 1686, lf 128; or Cambr. Mm. 2. 5.]
Venus me ȝaf my lust / my likerousnesse
And Mars ȝaf me / my sturdy hardynesse]
Myn ascendent was Taur / and Mars ther-Inne
Allas / allas / that euere loue was synne
I folwed ay / myn Inclinacion
By vertu / of my constellacion 616.
That made me / I koude noght withdrawe
My chambre of Venus / from a good felawe
[ȝet haue I Mars merk / vp-on my face [Cambr. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, leaf 74, line 19]
And also / in a nother pryue place
ffor god so wysely / be my sauacioun [Not in Addit. 5140, lf 96, bk; or Harl. 7335, lf 69; or Sloane 1685, lf 111; MS Reg. 18 C ii, lf 112, bk; Sloane 1686, lf 128; or Cambr. Mm. 2. 5.]
I louede neuere / by no discrecioun
But euere folwed / myn appetit
Al were he short / long blak or whiȝt 624
I toke no kepe / so that he liked me
How poore he was / ne eke of what degree] [MS Dd. 4. 24 extract stops]
¶ What sholde I seye / but at the Monthes ende
This ioly clerk / Iankyn þat was so hende 628
Hath wedded me / with greet solempnytee
And to hym yaf I / al the lond and fee
That euere was me yeuen / ther bifore
But afterward / repented me ful sore 632
He nolde suffre / no thyng of my list
By god / he smoot me ones / on the lyst
ffor that I rente / out of his book a leef
That of the strook/ myn ere weex al deef 636

Stibourne I was / as is a leonesse
And of my tonge / a verray Iangleresse
And walke I wolde / as I hadde doon biforn
ffrom hous to hous / al-thogh he hadde it sworn
ffor which / he often tymes / wolde preche
And me / of olde Romayn gestes teche
How he Symplicius Gallus / lafte his wif
And hire forsook for terme of al his lif
Noght but for open heueded he hir say
Lokynge out at his dore / vp-on a day
¶ Another Romayn / tolde he me by name
That for his wyf / was at a Someres game
With-outen his wityng / he forsook hire eke
And thanne wolde he / vp-on his Bible seke
That ilke prouerbe / of Ecclesiaste
Where he comandeth / and forbedeth faste
Man shal nat suffre his wyf / go roule aboute
Thanne wold he seye right thus / with-outen doute
Who so þat buyldeth his hous / al of salwes
And priketh his blynde hors / ouer the falwes
And suffreth his wyf / to go seken halwes
Is worthy / to ben hanged on the galwes
But al for noght I sette noght an hawe
Of his prouerbe / nof his olde sawe
Ny wolde nat of hym corrected be
I hate hym / þat my vices telleth me
And so doon mo / god woot of vs than I
This made hym / with me wood al outrely
I nolde noght forbere hym / in no cas
¶ Now wol I sey yow sooth / by Seint Thomas
Why þat I rente / out of his book a leef
ffor which / he smoot me so / þat I was deef
He hadde a book/ þat gladly nyght and day
ffor his disport he wolde rede alway
He clepyd it Valerie and Theofraste
At which book/ he logh alwey ful faste

nota

[leaf 66]

And eek ther was / som tyme a clerk at Rome
A Cardynal / that highte Seint Ierome
That made a book' agayn Iovinian
In which book' eek ther was Tertulan
Crisippus / Trotula / and Helowys
That was Abbesse / nat fer fro Parys
And eek the parables / of Salomon
Ouydes art' and bokes many on
And alle thise were bounden / in o volume
And euery nyght and day / was his custume
Whan he hadde leyser / and vacacioñ
ffrom oother / worldly ocupacioñ
To reden in this book' of wikked wyues
He knew of hem / mo legendes and lyues
Than been of goode wyues in the Bible
ffor trusteth wel / it is an inpossible
That any clerk' wol speke good of wyues
But if it be / of holy seintes lyues
Nof noon oother womman / neuer the mo
Who peynted the leon / tel me who
By god / if wo*m*men / hadden writen stories
As clerkes han / with-Inne hir oratories
They wolde han writen of men / moore wikkednesse
Than al the mark of Adam may redresse
The children / of Mercurie and Venus
Been in hir wirkyng/ ful contrarius
Mercurie loueth / wysdam and science [leaf 66, back]
And Venus loueth / Riot and dispence
And for hir diu*e*rse / disposicioñ
Ech faileth / in ootheres exaltacioñ
And thus god woot' Mercurie is desolat
In pisces / wher venus is exaltat'
And venus faileth / ther Mercurie is reysed
Ther-fore no wo*m*man / of no clerk is preysed
The clerk' whan he is old / and may noght do
Of venus werkes / worth his olde sho

Thanne sit he doun / and writ in his dotage
That wommen / kan nat kepe hir mariage
¶ But now to purpos / why I tolde thee
That I was beten / for a book pardee
Vp-on a nyght' Iankyn þat was oure sire
Redde on his book/ as he sat by the fire
Of Eua first/ þat for hir wikkednesse
Was al mankynde / broght to wrecchednesse
[ffor whiche that ihesu crist/him self was slayn
That bought vs / with his hert blod a-gayn
Loo heere expres of wommen / may ȝe fynde
That woman was the losse/of al mankynde]
¶ Tho redde he me / how Sampson loste his herys
Slepynge / his lemman kitte it with hir sherys
Thurgh which tresoñ / loste he bothe hise eyen
¶ Tho redde he me / if that I shal nat lyen
Of hercules / and of his Dianyre
That caused hym / to sette hym self a fyre
¶ No thyng forgat he / the sorwe and wo
That Socrates / hadde with his wyues two
How Xantippa / caste pisse vp-on his heed
This sely man sat stille / as he were deed
He wipte his heed / namoore dorste he seyn
But er that thonder stynte / comth a reyn
¶ Of Phasifpha / that was the queene of Crete
ffor shrewednesse / hym thoughte the tale swete
ffy spek namoore / it is a grisly thyng'
Of hire horrible lust' and hir likyng'
¶ Of Clitermystra / for hir lecherye
That falsly / made hir housbonde for to dye
He redde it' with ful good deuocioun
¶ He tolde me eek' for what occasioun
Amphiorax / at Thebes loste his lyf
Myn housbonde / hadde a legende of his wyf
¶ Exiphilem / that for an Ouche of gold
Hath priuely / vn-to the grekys told

[Camb. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, *f* 75, *l.* 26] [*Not in Mm.* 2. 5; *not in Harl.* 7335, *f* 70, *bk*; *Harl.* 1758, *f* 96; *Ad.* 5140, *f* 98; *Sloane* 1685, *f* 112, *bk*; *Sloane* 1686, *f* 129, *bk*.]

[leaf 67]

Wher þat hir housbonde / hidde hym in a place
ffor which / he hadde at Thebes sory grace
¶ Of lyma tolde he me / and of lucie
They bothe / made hir housbondes for to dye
That oon for loue / that oother was for hate
Lyma hir housbonde / on an euen late
Empoysoned hath / for þat she was his fo
Lucya likerous / loued hir housbonde so
That for he sholde alwey / vp-on hir thynke
She yaf hym / swich a manere loue drynke
That he was deed / er it were by the morwe
And thus algates / housbondes han sorwe
¶ Thanne tolde he me / how þat oon latumyus
Compleygned / vn-to his felawe Arrius
That in his gardyn / growed swich a tree
On which he seyde / how þat hise wyues thre
Honged hem self / for hertes despitus
¶ O leeue brother / quod this Arrius
yif me a plante / of thilke blessed tree
And in my gardyn / planted shal it be
¶ Of latter date of wyues / hath he red
That somme han slayn / hir housbondes in hir bed
And lete hir lechour / dighte hire al the nyght
Whan þat the corps / lay in the floor vp ryght
¶ And somme / han dryuen nayles in hir brayn
Whil þat they sleepe / and thus they han hem slayn
¶ Somme han hem yeuen poysoun / in hir drynke
He spak moore harm / than herte may bithynke
And ther with al / he knew of mo prouerbes
Than in this world / ther growen gras or herbes
Bet is quod he / thyn habitacioun
Be with a leon / or a foul dragoun
Than with a womman / vsyng for to chide
Bet is quod he / hye in the roof abyde
Than with an angry wyf / down in the hous
They been so wikked / and contrarious

They haten / that hir housbondes loueth ay
He seyde / a womman / cast hir shame away
Whan she cast of hir smok' and forther mo [leaf 67, back]
A fair wo*m*man / but she be chaast also
Is lyk a gold ryng' in a sowes nose
Who wolde wene / or who wolde suppose
The wo / that in myn herte was and pyne
¶ And whan I say / he wolde neu*er*e fyne
To reden / on this cursed book al nyght'
Al sodeynly / thre leues / haue I plyght'
Out of his book' right as he radde / and eke
I with my fist' so took [him] on the cheke
That in oure fyr/ he fil bakward adown
And he vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun
And with his fest/ he smoot me on the heed
That in the floor / I lay as I were deed
And whan he say / how stille þat I lay
He was agast' and wolde haue fled his way
Til atte laste / out of my swowgh I brayde
O hastow slayn me / false theef I sayde
And for my land / thus hastow mordred me
Er I be deed / yet wol I kisse thee
¶ And neer he cam / and kneled faire adown
And seyde / deere suster Alisoun
As help me god / I shal thee neu*er*e smyte
That I haue doon / it is thy self to wyte
ffor*y*eue it me / and that I thee biseke
And yet eft soones / I hitte hym on the cheke
And seyde theef/ thus muchel am I wreke
Now wol I dye / I may no lenger speke
¶ But at the laste / with muchel care and wo
We fille acorded / by vs seluen two
He yaf me / al the brydel in myn hond
To han the gouernance / of hous and lond
And of his tonge / and his hond also
And made hym brenne his book' anon right tho

And whan that I hadde / geten vn-to me
By maistrye / al the soueraynetee
And þat he seyde / myn owene trewe wyf
Do as thee lust' the terme of al thy lyf
Keepe thyn honour / and keepe eek myn estaat
After that day / we hadde neuere debaat/
God help me so / I was to hym as kynde [leaf 68]
As any wyf / from Denmark' vn-to Inde
And also trewe / and so was he to me
I pray to god / that sit in magestee
So blesse his soule / for his mercy deere
Now wol I seye my tale / if ye wol heere

[*The Wrangle between the Summoner and Friar.*]

The frere logh / whan he hadde herd al this
Now dame quod he / so haue I ioye / or blys
This is a long preamble / of a tale
And whan the Somnour / herde the frere gale
¶ Lo quod the Somnour / goddes armes two
A frere / wol entremette hym euere mo
Loo goode men / a flye / and eek a frere
Wol falle in euery dyssh and matere
What spekestow / of preambulacioun
What amble / or trotte / or pees / or go sit doun
Thow lettest oure disport' in this manere
¶ Ye woltow so / sir Somnour / quod the frere
Now by my feith / I shal er that I go
Telle of a Somnour / swich a tale / or two
That al the folk/ shal laughen in this place
¶ Now ellis frere / I wol bishrewe thy face
Quod this Somnour / and I bishrewe me
But if I telle tales / two or thre
Of freres / er I come to Sydyngborne
That I shal make / thyn herte for to morne

ffor wel I woot' thy pacience is gon
¶ Oure hoost' cryde pees / and that anon
And seyde / lat the womman / telle hir tale
Ye fare as folk/ that dronken ben of Ale
Do dame / tel forth youre tale / and that is best'
¶ Al reddy sire quod she / right as yow lest'
If I haue licence / of this worthy frere
¶ Yis dame quod he / tel forth / and I wol heere

¶ Here endeth the prologe of the Wyf of Bathe ☙

¶ Here bigynneth the tale / of the Wyf of Bathe
[leaf 68, back]

IN tholde dayes / of the kyng Arthour
Of which that Britons / speken greet honour.
Al was this land / fulfild of ffairye
The Elf queene / with hir ioly compaignye
Daunced ful ofte / in many a grene mede
This was / the olde opynyon / as I rede
I speke / of many hundred yerys ago
But now kan no man / se none Elues mo
ffor now the grete charitee / and prayeres
Of lymytours / and othere holy freres
That serchen / euery lond and euery streem
As thikke / as motes in the sonne beem
Blessynge halles / chambres / kichenes boures
Citees / Burghes / Castels / hye Toures
Thropes / Bernes / Shipnes / dayeryes
This maketh / þat ther been no fairyes
ffor ther as wont to walken was an Elf
Ther walketh now / the lymytour hym self
In vndermelys / and in morwenynges
And seith his matyns / and his holy thynges
As he gooth / in his lymytacioun
Wommen / may go saufly vp and down
In euery bussh / or vnder euery tree
Ther is noon oother Incubus / but he
And he ne wol doon hem / but dishonour
¶ And so bifel / that this kyng Arthour
Hadde in his hous / a lusty Bachiler
That on a day / cam ridyng fro Ryuer

And happed that allone / as he was born
He say a mayde / walkynge hym biforn
Of which mayde / anoon maugree hir hed
By verray force / he rafte hir maydenhed
ffor which oppressioun / was swich clamour
And swich pursuyte / vn-to the kyng Arthour
That dampned was this knyght/ for to be deed
By cours of lawe / and sholde han lost his heed
Par auenture / swich was the statut tho [leaf 69]
But that the queene / and othere ladyes mo
So longe preyden / the kyng of grace
Til he his lyf / hym graunted in the place
And yaf hym to the queene / al at hir wille
To chese / whether she wolde / hym saue or spille
The queen thanked the kyng with al hir might
And after this / thus spak she to the knyght
Whan that she saw / hir tyme vp-on a day
Thow standest yet quod she / in swich array
That of thy lyf / yet hastow no suretee
I graunte thee lyf / if thow kanst tellen me
What thyng is it þat wommen moost desiren
Be war / and keepe thy nekke boon from Iren
And if thow kanst nat / tellen me anon
Yet wol I yeue thee leue / for to gon
A twelf monthe and a day / to seche and lere
An answere suffisant in this matere
And seuretee wol I han / er that thow pace
Thy body / for to yelden / in this place
¶ Wo was this knyght/ and sorwefully he siketh
But what he may nat doon / al as hym liketh
And atte laste / he chees hym for to wende
And come agayn / right at the yeres ende
With swich answere / as god wolde hym purueye
And taketh his leue / and wendeth forth his weye
He seketh euery hous / and euery place
Where as he hopeth / for to fynde grace

To lerne / what thyng' wommen loue moost
But he ne koude / arryuen in no coost'
Where as he myghte fynde / in this matere
Two creatures / acordyng' in feere
¶ Somme seyden / wommen louen best richesse
Somme seyde honour / somme seyde Iolifnesse
Somme riche array / somme lust abeddo
And ofte tyme / to be widwe and wedde
Somme seyde / that oure herte / is moost esed
Whan that we been / yflatered and yplesed
He gooth ful ny the sothe / I wol nat lye
A man shal wynne vs best / with flaterye
And with attendaunce / and with bisynesse [leaf 69, back]
Been we ylymed / bothe moore and lesse
¶ And somme seyn / þat we louen best
ffor to be free / and do as vs lest'
And that no man / repreue vs of oure vice
But seye þat we be wise / and no thyng nyce
ffor trewely / ther is noon of vs alle
If any wight' wolde clawe vs on the galle
That we nyl like / for he seith vs sooth
Assay / and he shal fynde it' that so dooth
ffor be we / neuer so vicious / with-Inne
We wol be holden wise / and clene of synne
¶ And somme seyn / that greet delit han we
ffor to be holden / stable and eek secree
And in o purpos / stedefastly to dwelle
And nat biwreye thyng' that men vs telle
But that tale / is nat worth a Rake stele
Pardee / we wommen / konne no thyng hele
Witnesse on Mida / wol ye heere the tale
¶ Ouyde / amonges othere thynges smale
Seyde / Mida / hadde vnder his longe herys
Growynge vp on his heed / two Asses erys
The which vice he hidde / as he best myghte
fful sotilly / from euery mannes sighte

That saue his wyf / ther wiste of it na mo
He loued hire moost' and trusted hire also
He preyed hire / that to no creature
She sholde tellen / of his diffigure
¶ She swoor hym nay / for al this world to wynne
She nolde do / that vileynye / or syn
To make hir housbonde / han so foul a name'
She nolde nat telle it' for hir owene shame
But nathelees / hir thoughte þat she dyde
That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde
Hir thoughte / it swal so soore aboute hir herte
That nedely / som word / hir moste asterte
And sith / she dorste nat telle it to no man
Doun to a Marys / faste by she ran
Til she cam there / hir herte was a fyre
And as a Bitore / bombleth in the Myre
She leyde hir mouth / vn-to the water down [leaf 70]
Biwreye me nat' thow water with thy sown
Quod she / to thee I telle it and namo
Myn housbonde / hath longe Asses erys two
Now is myn herte al hool / now it is oute
I myghte no lenger / kepe it out of doute
Heere may ye see / thogh we a tyme abyde
Yet out it moot' we kan no conseil hyde
The remenant of the tale / if ye wol heere
Redeth Ouyde / and ther ye may it leere
¶ This knyght' of which my tale is specially
Whan that he say / he myghte nat come ther by
This is to seye / what wommen louen moost'
With-Inne his brest' ful sorweful was the goost
But hom he gooth / he myghte nat soiorne
The day was come / that homward moste he torne
And in his wey / it happed hym to ryde
In al this care / vnder a fforest syde
Wher as he say / vp on a daunce go
Of ladyes .xxiiij. and yet mo

Toward the whiche daunce / he drow ful yerne
In hope / that som wisdom sholde he lerne
But *cer*teynly / er he cam fully there ·
Vanysshed was this daunce / he nyste where
No creature say he / that bar lyf
Saue on the grene / he say sittynge a wyf
A fouler wight' ther may no man deuyse
Agayn the knyght' this olde wyf gan ryse
And seyde sire knyght' heer forth ne lyth no wey
Tel me / what þat ye seken by youre fey
Par auenture / it may the bettre be
This olde folk' konne muchel thyng quod she
¶ My leeue moder / quod this knyght *cer*teyn
I nam but deed / but if that I kan seyn
What thyng it is / that wommen moost desire
Koude ye me wisse / I wolde wel quyte youre hyre
¶ Plight me thy trouthe / here in myn hand quod she
The nexte thyng' that I requere thee
Thow shalt it do / if it lye in thy myght'
And I wol telle it yow / er it be nyght'
¶ Haue here my trouthe / quod the knyght I graunte [If 70, bk]
¶ Thanne quod she / I dar me wel auaunte
Thy lyf is sauf/ for I wole stonde ther by
Vp-on my lyf/ the queene wol seye as I
Lat see / which is the prouddeste of hem alle
That wereth on / a cou*er*chief / or a calle
That dar seye nay / of that I shal thee teche
Lat vs go forth / with-outen lenger speche
Tho rowned she / a pistel in his ere
And bad hym to be glad / and haue no fere
¶ Whan they be comen to the Court' this knyght'
Seyde / he hadde holde his day / as he had hight'
And redy was his answere / as he sayde
fful many a noble wyf' and many a mayde
And many a widwe / for þat they ben wise
The queene hir self / sittyng as Iustise

Assembled been / this answere for to here
And afterward / this knyght bode appere
To euery wight comanded was silence
And that the knyght sholde telle in audience
What thyng that worldly wommen louen best
This knyght ne stood nat stille as dooth a best
But to his question / anon answerde
With manly voys / that al the court it herd
¶ My lige lady / generally quod he
Wommen desire / to haue soucreyntee
As wel / ouer hir housbonde / as hir loue
And for to been in maistrie / hym aboue
This is youre mooste desir / thogh ye me kille
Dooth as yow list I am here at youre wille
¶ In al the Court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
Ne wydwe / that contraryed that he sayde
But seyden / he was worthy han his lyf
¶ And with that word / vp stirte that olde wyf
Which that the knyght say sittyng on the grene
Mercy quod she / my soue*r*eyn lady queene
Er that youre Court departe / do me right
I taughte this answere / vn-to the knyght
ffor which / he plighte me his trouthe there
The firste thyng I wolde hym requere
He wolde it do / if it laye in his myght [leaf 71]
Bifore the court thanne preye I thee sire knyght
Quod she / that thow me take vn-to thy wyf
ffor wel thow woost that I haue kept thy lyf
If I seye fals / sey nay vp-on thy fey
¶ This knyght answerde / allas and weilawey
I woot right wel / that swich was my biheste
ffor goddes loue / as chees a newe requeste
Taak al my good / and lat my body go
¶ Nay thanne quod she / I shrewe vs bothe two
ffor thogh þat I be foul / old / and poore
I nolde for al the metal / ne for oore

That vnder erthe is graue / or lith aboue
But if thy wyf I were / and eek thy loue
¶ My loue quod he / nay my dampnacioñ
Allas / that any of my nacioñ
Sholde euere / so foule disp*ar*aged be
But al for noght' thende is this / that he
Constreyned was / he nedes moste hir wedde
And taketh his olde wyf / and goth to bedde
¶ Now wolden som men / seye p*ar* auenture
That for my necligence / I do no cure
To tellen yow / the ioye / and al tharray
That at the feste / was that ilke day
To which thyng' shortly / answere I shal
I seye / ther nas no ioye / ne feste at al
Ther nas but heuynesse / and muche sorwe
ffor p*ri*uely / he wedded hir*e* on morwe
And al day after / hidde hym as an Owle
So wo was hym / his wyf looked so foule
¶ Greet was the wo / the knyght hadde in his thoght'
Whan he was with his wyf / a bedde ybrought'
He walweth / and he turneth to and fro
His olde wyf/ lay smylyng eu*er*e mo
And seyde / o deere housbonde benedicite
ffareth euery knyght thus with his wyf/ as ye
Is this the lawe / of kyng Arthures hous
Is euery knyght of his / thus daungerous
I am youre owene loue / and youre wyf
I am she / which that saued hath youre lyf
And c*er*tes / yet ne dide I yow neu*er*e vnright' [leaf 71, back]
Why fare ye thus with me / this firste nyght'
Ye faren lyk a man / hadde lost his wit
What is my gilt/ for goddes loue tel it
And it shal ben amended / if I may
¶ Amended quod this knyght' allas nay / nay
It wol nat ben amended neu*er*e mo
Thow art so loothly / and so old also

And ther-to comen / of so lowe a kynde
That litel wonder is / thogh I walwe and wynde
So wolde god / myn herte wolde breste
¶ Is this quod she / the cause of youre vnreste
¶ Ye certeynly quod he / no wonder is
¶ Now sire quod she / I koude amende al this
If that me liste / er it were dayes thre
So wel ye myghte / bere yow vn-to me
¶ But for ye speken of swich gentillesse ¶ Nota bene.
As is descended / out of old richesse
That therfore / sholden ye be gentil men
Swich errogañce / is nat worth an hen
Looke who þat is / moost vertuous alway
Pryuee and apert' and moost entendeth ay
To do / the gentil dedes / þat he kan
Taak hym / for the gentileste man
Crist/ wol we clayme of hym oure gentilesse
Nat of oure eldres / for hir old richesse
ffor thogh they yeue vs / al hir heritage
ffor which we clame / to been of hir parage
Yet may they nat biquethe / for no thyng'
To noon of vs / hir vertuous lyuyng'
That made hem / gentil men ycalled be
And bad vs / folwen hem in swich degree
¶ Wel kan / the wise poete of fflorence
That highte Dant' speken in this sentence
Lo / in swich manere rym / is Dantes tale
fful selde vp riseth / by his brañches smale
Prowesse of man / for god of his prowesse
Wole /. that of hym / we clayme oure gentilesse
ffor of oure eldres / may we no thyng clayme
But temporel thyng' that man may hurte and mayme
Eek euery wight' woot this as wel I [leaf 72]
If gentilesse / were planted naturelly
Vn-to a certeyn lynage / doun the lyne
Pryuee and apert' thanne wolde they neuere fyne

To doon / of gentilesse / the faire office
They myghte do / no vileynye or vice
¶ Taak fyr / and bere it in the derkeste hous
Bitwix this / and the mount of kaukasous
And lat men shette the dores / and go thenne
Yet wol the fyr / as faire lye and brenne
As twenty thousand men / myghte it biholde
His office naturel / ay wol it holde
Vp peril of my lyf' til that it dye
Here may ye se wel / how þat genterye
Is nat annexed / to possessiou)
Sith folk' ne doon hir operacion)
Alwey / as dooth the fyr lo in his kynde
ffor god it woot' men may wel often fynde
A lordes sone / do shame and vileynye
And he þat wol han prys / of his gentrye
ffor he was born / of a gentil hous
And hadde hise eldres / noble and vertuous
And nyl hym seluen / do no gentil dedis
Ne folwen his gentil Auncestre / that deed is
He nys nat gentil / be he duc' or Erl
ffor vileynes synful dedes / maken a cherl
ffor gentilesse / nys but renomee
Of thyne Auncestres / for hir hye bountee
Which is straunge thyng' for thy persone
Thy gentilesse / cometh fro god allone
Thanne comth / oure verray gentilesse of grace
It was no thyng' biquethe vs / with oure place
Thenketh how noble / as seith Valerius
Was thilke / Tullius hostillius
That out of pouerte / roos to heigh noblesse
Redeth Senek' and redeth eek Boece
Ther shul ye seen expres / þat no drede is
That he is gentil / that dooth gentil dedis
And ther-fore / leue housbonde / I thus conclude
Al were it' that myne Auncestres weren rude

Yet may the hye god / and so hope I / [leaf 72, back]
Graunte me grace / to lyuen vertuously
Thanne am I gentil / whan þat I bigynne
To lyuen vertuously / and weyue synne
¶ And ther as ye / of pouerte me repreue
The hye god / on whom þat we bileue
In wilful pouerte / chees to lyue his lyf
And certes euery man / mayden / or wyf
May vnderstonde / þat Ihesus heuene kyng
Ne wolde nat chese / a vicious lyuyng
Glad pouerte / is an honeste thyng certeyn
This wol Senek and othere clerkes seyn
Who so þat halt hym payd / of his pouerte
I holde hym riche / al hadde he nat a sherte
He that coueiteth / is a poure wight
ffor he wolde han / that is nat in his myght
But he þat noght hath / ne coueiteth haue
Is riche / al thogh we holde hym but a knaue
Verray pouerte / is synne proprely
Iuuenal seith / of pouerte myrily
¶ The poure man / whan he gooth by the weye
Biforn the theues / he may synge and pleye
Pouerte is hateful good / and as I gesse
A ful greet bryngere / out of bisynesse
A greet amendere eek of Sapience
To hym / that taketh it in pacience
Pouerte is thyng al thogh it seme elenge
Possessiõ / that no wight wol chalenge
Pouerte ful often / whan a man is lowe
Maketh hym self/ and eek his god to knowe
Pouerte / a spectacle is / as thynketh me
Thurgh which he may / his verray freendes se
And ther-fore sire / syn þat I noght yow greue
Of my pouerte / namoore ye me repreue
¶ Now sire / of elde ye repreue me
And certes sire / thogh noon auctoritee

Were in no book/ ye gentils of honour
Seyn / þat men an old wight' sholde doon fauour
And clepe hym fader / for youre gentilesse
And Auctours / shal I fynden / as I gesse 1212
¶ Now ther ye seye / that I am foul and old [leaf 78]
Thanne drede ycw noght' to been a Cokewold
ffor filthe and elde / al-so mote I thee
Been grete wardeyns / vp-on chastitee 1216
But nathelees / syn I knowe youre delit/
I shal fulfille / youre worldly appetit'
¶ Chees now quod she / oon of thise thinges tweye
To han me foul and old / til that I deye 1220
And be to yow / a trewe humble wyf
And neuere yow displese / in al my lyf
Or ellis / ye wol han me / yong and fair
And take youre auenture / of the repair 1224
That shal be to youre hous / by cause of me
Or in som oother place / may wel be
Now chees your seluen / wheither þat yow liketh
¶ This knyght auyseth hym / and soore siketh 1228
But atte laste / he seyde in this manere
My lady and my loue / and wyf so deere
I putte me / in youre wise gouernañce
Cheseth youre self' which þat may be moost plesañce 1232
And moost honour to yow / and me also
I do no fors / the wheither of the two
ffor as yow liketh / it suffiseth me
¶ Than haue I gete / of yow maistrye / quod she 1236
Syn I may chese / and gouerne as me lest'
¶ Ye certes wyf quod he / I holde it best'
¶ Kys me quod she / we be no lenger wrothe
ffor by my trouthe / I wol be to yow bothe 1240
This is to seyn / ye bothe fair and good
I pray to god / that I mote steruen wood
But I to yow / be al so good and trewe
As euere was wyf/ syn þat the world was nowe 1244

And but I be to morn / as fair to sene
Ay any lady / Emperice / or Queene
That is bitwix the Est' and eek the West'
Do with my lyf/ and deth / right as yow lest' 1248
Cast vp the Curtyn / looke how þat it is
And whan the knyght' say verraily al this
That she so fair was / and so yong ther-to
ffor ioye he hente hire / in his armes two 1252
His herte bathed / in a bath of blisse [leaf 73, back]
A thousand tyme a rewe / he gan hir kisse
And she obeyed hym / in euery thyng'
That myghte do hym plesance / or likyng' 1256
And thus they lyue / vn-to hir lyues ende
In parfit ioye / and Ihesu crist vs sende
Housbondes meke / yonge / and fressh a beddo
And grace / touerbyde hem that we wedde 1260
And eek/ I praye Ihesu shorte hir lyues
That noght wol be gouerned / by hir wyues
And olde / and angry nygardes of dispence
God sende hem soone / verray pestilence 1264

¶ Here endeth the Wyues tale of Bathe

¶ The prologe of the ffreres tale [on leaf 73, back]

This worthy lymytour / this noble frere
He made al wey / a manere louryng cheere
Vp on the Somnour / but for honestee
No vileyns word / as yet to hym spak he
But atte laste / he seyde vn-to the wyf
Dame quod he / god yeue yow right good lyf
Ye han heer touched / al so mote I thee
In scole matere / greet difficultee
Ye han seyd muche thyng right wel I seye
But dame / here as we ryden by the weye
Vs nedeth nat to speken / but of game
And lete Auctoritees / on goddes name
To prechyng and to scole of clergye
But if it like / to this compaignye
I wol yow / of a Somnour telle a game
Pardee / ye may wel knowe by the name
That of a Somnour / may no good be sayd
I praye / that noon of yow / be ypayd
A somnour / is a rennere vp and doun
With mandementz / for fornicacioun
And is ybet at euery townes ende
¶ Oure hoost tho spak / a sire / ye sholde be hende
And curteys / as a man of youre estaat [leaf 74]
In compaignye / we wol no debaat
Telleth youre tale / and lat the Somnour be
¶ Nay quod the Somnour / lat hym seye to me
What so hym list whan it comth to my lot
By god / I shal hym quyten euery grot
I shal hym telle / which a gret honour
It is / to be a flaterynge lymytour
And of / many another manere cryme
Which nedeth nat rehercen / for this tyme
And his office / I schal hym telle ywys
¶ Oure hoost answerde / pees namoore of this
And after this / he seyde vn-to the frere
Tel forth youre tale / leeue maister deere
Here endeth the prologe of the ffrere

and bigynneth his tale

WHilom / ther was dwellynge in my contree
An Erchedekne / a man of hy degree
That boldely / dide execucioñ
In punysshynge of ffornicacioñ
Of wicchecraft[1] and eek of Bawderye
Of diffamacioñ / and auoutrye
Of chirche Reues / and of testamentz
Of contractes / and eek of lakke of sacramentz
Of vsure / and of Symonye also
But certes / lecchours / dide he grettest wo
They sholde synge[2]n if that they were hent[1]
And smale tyth[2]eres were foule yschent[1]
If any persoñ /[2] wold vp-on hem pleyne
Ther myghte[2] asterte hym no pecunial peyne
ffor smale[2] tithes & for smal offryng[1]
He made the[2] peple ful pitusly to syng[1]
ffor er the[2] bysschop cagħt hem *with* hys hooc
They were[2] in the erchideknys book/
And thanne[2] had he thurgħ hys Iurisdiccioñ
Power / to[2] do on hem correccion
He hadde a Somnour / redy to his hond [leaf 74, back]
A slyer boy / nas noon in Engelond
ffor subtilly / he hadde his espiaille
That taughte hym / wher hym myghte auaille
He koude spare / of lecchours / oon or two
To techen hym / to foure and twenty mo
ffor theigh this Somnour / wood were as an haro
To telle his harlotrye / I wol nat spare

[1] *From here to the end of this line is in a later 15th-century hand in the MS.*]

ffor we been / out of his correccioñ
They han of vs / no Iurisdiccioñ
Ne neuere shullen / terme of hir lyues
¶ Peter / so been the wommen of the styves 1332
Quod this Somnour / yput out of my cure
¶ Pees with myschaunce / and with mysauenture
Thus seyde oure hoost / and lat hym telle his tale
Now telleth forth / thogh þat the Somnour gale 1336
Ne spareth nat myn owene mayster deere
¶ This false theef this Somnour / quod the frere
Hadde alwey / baudes redy to his hond
As any hauk to lure in Engelond 1340
That tolde hym / al the secree þat they knewe
ffor hire aqueyntance / was nat come of newe
They weren / hise Approwours pryuely.
He took hym self / a greet profit ther by 1344
His maister knew nat alwey / what he wan
With-outen mandement a lewed man
He koude somne / on peyne of cristes curs
And they were glade / for to fille his purs 1348
And make hym / grete festes atte nale
And right as Iudas / hadde purses smale
And was a theef/ right swich a theef was he
His maister / hadde but half his duetee 1352
He was / if I shal yeuen hym his laude
A theef / and eek a somnour / and a baude
He hadde eek wenches / at his retenue
That wheither þat sir Robert / or sire hewe 1356
Or Iakke / or Rauf or who so that it were
That lay by hem / they tolde it in his ere
Thus was the wenche and he / of oon assent
And he wolde fecche / a feyned mandement 1360
And somne hem to Chapitre / bothe two [leaf 75]
And pile the man / and lete the wenche go
¶ Thanne wolde he seye / freend I shal for thy sake
Do stryke hire / out of oure lettres blake 1364

Thee thar namore / as in this cas *trauaille*
I am thy freend / ther I thee may auaille
Certeyn / he knew of bryberyes mo
Than possible is / to telle in yeres two
ffor in this world / nys dogge for the bowe
That kan an hurt deer / from an hool knowe
Bet than this Somnour / knewe a sly lecchour
Or an Auouter / or a *par*amour
And for that was / the fruyt of al his rente
Ther-fore on it' he sette al his ententc
¶ And so bifel / that ones on a day
This Somnour / euere waityng on his pray
ffor to somne an old wydewe / a Ribibe
ffeynynge a cause / for he wolde brybe
Happed / that he say / bifore hym ryde
A gay yeman / vnder a fforest syde
A bowe he bar / and arwes brighte & kene
He hadde vp-on / a courtepy of grene
An hat vp-on his heed / with frenges blake
¶ Sire quod this Somnour / hayl / and wel atake
¶ Wel come quod he / and euery good felawe
Where ridestow / vnder this grene shawe
Seyde this yeman / wiltow fer to day
¶ This Somnour hym answerde / and seyde nay
Here faste by quod he / is myn entente
To ryden / for to reysen vp a rente
That longeth / to my lordes duetee
¶ Artow thanne a Bailly? / ye quod he
He dorste nat' for verray filthe and shame
Seye þat he was a Somnour / for the name
¶ Dep*ar*dieux quod this yeman / deere brother
Thow art a bailly / and I am another
I am vnknowen / as in this contree
Of thyn aqueyntance / I wolde praye thee
And eek of bretherhede / if þat yow leste
I haue gold / and siluer/ in my cheste

If that thee happed to come in oure shire [leaf 75, back]
Al shal be thyn / right as thow wolt desire
¶ Graunt *mercy* quod this Somnour / by my feith
Euerich in ootheres hond / his trouthe leyth
ffor to be sworn bretheren / til they deye
In daliaunce / they ryden forth and pleye
¶ This Somnour / which þat was / as ful of Iangles
As ful of venym / been thise waryangles
And euere enqueryng' vp-on euery thyng'
Brother quod he / where is now youre dwellyng'
Another day / if þat I sholde yow seche
This yeman hym answerde / in softe speche
¶ Brother quod he / fer in the North contree
Where as I hope / som tyme I shal thee see
Er we departe / I shal thee so wel wisse
That of myn hous / ne shaltow neuere mysse
¶ Now brother quod this Somnour I yow preye
Teche me / whil þat we ryden by the weye
Syn þat ye been a Baillyf / as am I
Som subtiltee / and tel me feithfully
In myn office / how I may moost wynne
And spareth nat' for conscience ne synne
But as my brother / tel me how do ye
¶ Now by my trouthe / brother deere / seyde he
As I shal tellen thee / a feithful tale
My wages been / ful streyte / and ful smale
My lord is hard to me / and daungerous
And myn office / is ful laborous
And therfore / by extorcions I lyue
ffor sothe I take / al that men wol me yeue
Algate / by sleighte / or by violence
ffro yeer to yeer / I wynne al my dispence
I kan no bettre tellen / feithfully
¶ Now certes quod this Somnour / so fare I
I spare nat to taken / god it woot'
But it be to heuy / or to hoot'

What I may gete / in conseil p*ri*uely
No manere conscience / of that haue I
Nere myn extorcioñ / I myghte nat lyuen
Ne of swiche Iapes / wol I nat be shryuen
Stomak' ne Conscience / ne knowe I noon [leaf 76]
I sherewe / thise Shryftes-fadres eu*er*ychon
Wel be we met' by god / and by Seint Iame
But leeue brother / tel me thanne thy name
Quod this Somnour / in this mene whyle
This yeman / gan a litel for to smyle
¶ Brother quod he / woltow þ*at* I thee telle
I am a feend / my dwellyng' is in helle
And here I ryde / aboute my purchasyng'
To wite / wher men wol yeue me any thyng'
My p*ur*chas / is theffect of al my rente
Looke how thow rydest' for the same entente
To wynne good / thow rekkest neu*er*e how
Right so fare I / for ryde wold I now
Vn-to the worldes ende / for a preye
¶ A quod this Somno*ur* / benedicite what sey ye
I wende / ye were a yeman trewely
Ye han a mannes shap*e* / as wel as I
Han ye a figure thanne / dete*r*mynat
In helle ther ye been / in youre estat
¶ Nay c*er*teynly quod he / ther haue we noon
But whan vs liketh / we kan take vs oon
Or ellis make yow seme / we ben shape
Som tyme / lyk a man / or lyk an Ape
Or lyk an Aungel / kan I ryde or go
It is no wonder thyng' theigh it be so
A lousy Iogelour / kan deceyue thee
And pardee yet kan I / moore craft than he
¶ Whi quod this Somnour / ryde ye thanne or goon
In sondry shap*e* / and nat alwey in oon
¶ ffor we quod he / wol vs swiche formes make
As moost able is / oure preyes for to take

¶ What maketh yow / to han al this labour
¶ fful many a cause / leue sire Somnour
Seyde this feend / but alle thyng hath tyme
The day is short/ and it is passed pryme
And yet ne wan I no thyng in this day
I wol entende / to wynnyng/ if I may
And nat entende / oure wittes to declare
ffor brother myn / thy wit is al to bare
To vnderstonde / al-thogh I tolde hem thee [leaf 76, back]
But for thow axest why labouren we
ffor som tyme / we been goddes Instrumentz
And meenes / to doon his comandementz
Whan that hym list/ vp on his creatures
In diuers art and in diuerse figures
With-outen hym / we han no myght certayn
If that hym lyst to stonde ther agayn
And som tyme / at oure preyere / han we leue
Oonly the body / and nat the soule greue
Witnesse on Iob / whom þat we diden wo
And som tyme / han we myght of bothe two
This is to seyn / of soule and body eke
And som tyme / be we suffred for to seke
Vp-on a man / and do his soule vnreste
And nat his body / and al is for the beste
Whan he with-standeth / oure temptacioũ
It is / a cause / of his sauacioũ
Al be it that it was / nat oure entente
He sholde be sauf but þat we wolde hym hente
And som tyme / be we seruant vn-to man
As to the Erchebisshope / Seint Dunstan
And to the Apostles / seruant eek was I
¶ Yet tel me / quod the Somnour feithfully
Make ye yow newe bodyes / thus alway
Of Elementz ? / the feend answerde nay
Som tyme we feyne / and som tyme we aryse
With dede bodyes / in ful sondry wyse

And speke as renably / and faire and wel
As to the Phitonissa / dide Samuel
And yet wol som men seye / it was nat he
I do no fors / of youre dyuynytee
But o thyng warne I thee / I wol nat Iape
Thow wolt algates wite / how we be shape
Thow shalt her afterwardes / my brother deere
Come there / thee nedeth nat of me to lere
ffor thow shalt by thyn owene experience
Konne in a chayer / rede of this sentence
Bet than Virgile / whil he was on lyue
Or Dant also / now lat vs ryde blyue
ffor I wol holde / compaignye with thee [leaf 77]
Til it be so / that thow forsake me
¶ Nay quod this Somnour / that shal nat bityde
I am a yeman / knowen is ful wyde
My trouthe wol I holde / as in this cas
ffor theigh thow were / the deuel Sathanas
My trouthe wol I holde / to thee my brother
As I am sworn / and ech of vs til oother
ffor to be trewe brother / in this cas
And bothe we goon / abouten oure purchas
Taak thow thy part what þat men wol thee yeue
And I shal myn / thus may we bothe lyue
And if that any of vs / haue moore than oother
Lat hym be trewe / and parte it with his brother
¶ I graunte quod the deuel / by my fey
And with that word / they ryden forth hir wey
And right at the entryng of the townes ende
To which this Somnour / shoop hym for to wende
They saye a Cart that charged was with hey
Which that a Cartere / droof forth in his wey
Deep was the wey / for which the Carte stood
This Cartere smoot and cryde as he were wood
Hayt Brok hayt Scot what spare ye for the stones
The feend quod he / yow fecche body and bones

As ferforthly / as euere were ye foled
So muchel wo / as I haue with yow tholed
The deuel haue al / bothe hors / and Cart' and hey
¶ This Somnour seyde / heer shul we han a pley
And neer the feend he drogh / as noght we were
fful pryuely / and rowned in his ere
Herkne my brother / herkne by thy feith
Herestow nat' how þat the Cartere seith
Hent it anon / for he hath yeue it thee
Bothe hey / and Cart' and eek his caples thre
¶ Nay quod the deuel / god woot' neuer a del
It is nat his entente / trust thow me wel
Axe hym thy self/ if thow nat trowest me
Or ellys stynt a while / and thow shalt se
¶ This Cartere / taketh his hors vp-on the croupe
And they bigonne / drawen and to stoupe
Heyt now quod he / ther Ihesu crist yow blesse [leaf 77, back]
And al his handes werk' bothe moore and lesse
That was wel twight' myn owene lyard boy
I pray god saue thee / and Seint loy
Now is my Cart' out of the slow pardee
¶ Lo brother quod the feend / what tolde I thee
Heere may ye se / myn owene deere brother
The Carl spak o thyng' but he thoghte another
Lat vs go forth / abouten oure viage
Heere wynne I no thyng vp-on cariage
¶ Whan that they comen / som what out of towne
This Somnour / to his brother gan to rowne
Brother quod he / here woneth an old rebekke
That hadde al-moost' as leef to lese hir nekke
As for to yeue a peny / of hir good
I wol han .xij. pens / thogh that she be wood
Or I wol somne hire / vn-to oure office
And yet god woot' of hire knowe I no vice
But for thow canst nat' as in this contree
Wynne thy cost' taak heer ensample of me

This Somnour / clappeth at the wydwes gate
Com out quod he / thow olde viritrate
I trowe thow hast' som frere / or preest with thee
¶ Who clappeth seyde this wyf / benedicitee 1584
God saue yow sire / what is youre swete wille
¶ I haue quod he / of somonce a bille
Vp peyne of cursyng' looke that thow be
To morn / bifore the Erchedeknes knee 1588
Tanswere to the court' of certeyn thynges
¶ Now lord quod she / crist Ihesu kyng of kynges
So wisly helpe me / as I ne may
I haue been syk' and that ful many a day 1592
I may nat go so fer quod she / ne ryde
But I be deed / so priketh it in my syde
May I nat axe a libel / sire Somnour
And answere there / by my procutour 1596
To swiche thyng' as men wole opposen me
¶ Yis quod this Somnour / pay anon lat see
Twelf pens to me / and I wol thee acquyte
I shal no profyt han ther by / but lyte 1600
My Maister hath the profit / and nat I [leaf 78]
Com of / and lat me ryden hastily
Yif me .xij. pens / I may no lenger tarye
¶ Twelf pens quod she / now lady Seinte Marie 1604
So wisly help me god / out of care and synne
This wyde world / thogh that I sholde wynne
Ne haue I nat .xij. pens / with-Inne myn hoold
Ye knowen wel / that I am poure and oold 1608
Kythe youre almesse / on me poure wrecche
¶ Nay thanne quod he / the foule feend me fecche
If I thexcuse / theigh thow shul be spilt'
¶ Allas quod she / god woot I haue no gilt' 161
¶ Pay me quod he / or by the swete Seinte Anne
As I wol bere awey / thy newe panne
ffor dette / which thow owest me of oold
Whan þat thow madest / thyn housbonde cokewold 16

I payde at hom / for thy correccioñ
¶ Thow lyxt quod she / by my sauacioñ
Ne was I neu*ere* er now / wydwe ne wyf'
Somoned vn-to youre court' in al' my lyf /
Ne neu*ere* I nas / but of my body trewe
Vn-to the deuel / blak' and row of hewe
Yeue I thy body / and my panne also
¶ And whan the deuel / herde hir*e* cursen so
Vp-on hir knees / he seyde in this manere
Now Mabely / myn owene moder deere
Is this youre wyl in ernest/ *þat* ye seye
¶ The deuel quod she / so fecche hym er he deye
And panne and al / but he wol hym repente
¶ Nay olde stot' that is nat myn entente
Quod this Somnour / for to repente me
ffor any thyng' that I haue had of thee
I wolde I hadde thy smok / and euery clooth
¶ Now brother quod the deuel / be noght wrooth
Thy body and this panne / been myne by right
Thow shalt w*ith* me to helle / yet to nyght'
Wher thow shalt knowen / of oure pryuetee
Moore / than a maister of dyuynytee
And with that word / this foule feend hym hente
Body and soule / he with the deuel wente
Wher as that Somnours / han hir heritage [leaf 78, back]
And god / that made after his ymage
Mankynde / saue / and gyde vs alle and some
And leue thise Somno*ur*s / goode men to bicome
¶ Lordynges I koude han told yow / quod the frere
Hadde I had leyser / for this Somno*ur* heere
After the text/ of crist' Poul and Iohn
And of oure othere doctours / many oon
Swich peynes / that youre hertes myghte agryse
Al be it so / no tonge may it deuyse
Thogh that I myghte / a thousand wynter telle
The peynes / of thilke cursed hous of helle

But for to kepe vs / fro that cursed place
Waketh / and preyeth Ihesu for his grace
So kepe vs / fro the temptour Sathanas
Herketh this word / beth war as in this cas
The leon sit in his awayt alway
To sle the Innocent if that he may
Disposeth ay youre hertes / to withstonde
The feend / that yow wolde maken thral and bonde
He may nat tempte yow / ouer youre myght
ffor crist wol be youre champion and knyght
And prayeth / that this Somnours hem repente
Of hir mysdedes / er that the feend hem hente

¶ Here endeth / the freres tale

¶ The Prologe / of the Somnours tale [on lf 78, bk]

This Somnour in his Stiropes / hye he stood
Vp-on this frere / his herte was so wood
That lyk an Aspen lief / he quook for Ire
¶ Lordynges quod he / but o thyng I desire
I yow biseke / that of youre curteisye
Syn ye han herd / this false frere lye
As suffreth me / I may my tale telle
This frere bosteth / that he knoweth helle
And god it woot / that it is litel wonder
ffreres and feendes / been but lyte a sonder
ffor pardee / ye han ofte tyme herd telle [leaf 70]
How that a frere / rauysshed was to helle
In Spirit ones / by avisioun
And as an Aungel / ladde hym vp and down
To shewen hym / the peynes þat ther were
In al the place / say he nat a frere
Of oother folk/ he say ynowe in wo
Vn-to this Angel / spak the frere tho
¶ Now Sire quod he / han freres swich a *grace*
That noon of hem / shal come to this place
¶ Yis quod this Aungel / many a Milioun
And vn-to Sathanas / he ladde hym doun
And now hath Sathanas / seith he a tayl
Brodder / than of a Carryk is the sayl
Hold vp thy tayl / thow Sathanas quod he
Shewe forth thyn ers / and lat the frere se
Where is thee nest of freres / in this place
And er þat / half a furlong wey of space

Right so as bees / out swarmen from an hyue
Out of the deueles ers / ther gonne dryue
Twenty thousand freres / on a route
And thurgh-out helle / swarmeden aboute
And comen again / as faste as they may gon
And in his ers / they crepten euerychon
He clapte his tayl agayn / and lay ful stille
This frere / whan he looked hadde his fille
Vp-on the tormentz / of this sory place
His spirit god restored of his grace
Vn-to his body agayn / and he awook
But nathelees / for fere yet he quook
So was the deueles ers / ay in his mynde
That is his heritage / of verray kynde
God saue yow alle / saue this cursed frere
My prologe / wol I ende / in this manere

¶ Here endeth the prologe of the Somnours tale

¶ Here bygynneth the Somnours tale ☙ [leaf 79, back]

LOrdynges / ther is in Yorkshire / as I gesse
A Mersh contree / called Holdernesse
In which / ther wente a lymytour aboute
To preche / and eek to begge / it is no doubte
And so bifel / that on a day this frere
Hadde preched at a chirche / in his manere
And specially / abouen euery thyng'
Excyted he the peple / in his prechyng'
To trentals / and to yeue for goddes sake
Wher-with men myghte / holy houses make
Ther as dyuyne seruice / is honoured
Nat ther / as it is wasted and deuoured
Ne ther / it nedeth nat' to be yeue
As to possessioners / that mowen lyue
Thanked be god / in wele and habundance
Trentals seyde he / deliuereth from penaunce
Hir freendes soules / as wel olde as yonge
Ye / whan that they / been hastily ysonge
Nat for to holde a preest' Ioly and gay
He syngeth nat' but o masse in a day
Deliuereth out quod he / anon the soules
fful hard it is / with flessh-hook/ or with oules
To been y-clawed / or to brenne / or bake
Now spede yow hastily / for cristes sake
And whan this frere / hadde seyd al his entente
With qui cum patre / forth his wey he wente
Whan folk in chirche / hadde yeue hym / what hem leste
He wente his wey / no lenger woldo he reste

With scryppe and typped staf / y-tukked hye
In euery hous / he gan to poure and prye
And beggeth Mele / and chese / or ellis corn
His felawe hadde a staf / typped with horn
A peyre of tables / al of yuory
And a poyntel / polysshed fetisly
And wroot the names / alwey as he stood
Of alle folk / that yaf hem any good
Ascaunces / that he wolde for hem preye [leaf 80]
Yif vs a busshel whete / Malt' or Reye
A goddes kechyl / or a trype of cheese
Or ellis what yow lyst' we may nat chese
A goddes half peny / or a masse peny
Or yif vs of youre brawn / if ye haue eny
A dagon of youre Blanket' leeue dame
Oure suster deere / lo heere I write youre name
Bacoñ / or boef / or swich thyng as ye fynde
A sturdy harlot' wente ay hem bihynde
That was hir hostes man / and baar a sak'
And what men yaf hem / leyde it on his bak'
And whan *that* he was out at dore anon
He planed awey / the names euerichon
That he biforn / hadde writen in his tables
He serued hem / with nyfles and *with* fables
¶ Nay ther thow lixt' thow Somnour quod the frere
¶ Pees quod oure hoost' for cristes moder deere
Tel forth thy tale / and spare it nat at al
¶ So thryue I quod this Somnour / so I shal
So longe he wente / hous by hous / til he
Cam til an hous / ther he was wont to be
Refresshed moore / than in an hundred placis
Syk lay the goode man / whos the place is
Bedrede vp-on a couche / lowe he lay
Deus hic quod he / O Thomas freend good day
Seyde this frere / curteisly and softe
Thomas quod he / god yelde yow ful ofte

Haue I vp-on this bench / faren ful wel
Heere haue I eten / many a murye mel
And fro the bench / he droof awey the cat'
And leyde adoun / his potente and his hat' 1776
And eek his scrippe / and sette hym softe adown
His felawe / was go walked in to town
fforth with his knaue / in-to that hostelrye
Wher as he shoope hym / thilke nyght to lye 1780
¶ O deere maister / quod this syke man
How han ye fare / sith that March bigan
I say yow noght' this fourtnyght' or moore
¶ God woot quod he / laboured I haue ful soore 1784
And specially / for thy sauacioñ [leaf 80, back]
Haue I seyd / many a precious orisoñ
And for oure othere freendes / god hem blesse
I haue to day / been at youre chirche at messe [at messe is in a later hand]
And seyd a sermon / after my symple wit
Nat al / after the text' of holy writ
ffor it is hard to yow / as I suppose
And ther-fore / wol I teche yow al the glose 1792
Glosyng' is a glorious thyng certeyn
ffor lettre sleeth / so as we clerkes seyn
Ther haue I taught hem / to be charitable
And spende hir good / ther it is resonable 1796
And ther I say oure dame / a where is she
¶ Yond in the yerd / I trowe þat she be
Seyde this man / and she wol come anon
¶ Ey maister / wel come be ye / by Seint Ioñn 1800
Seyde this wyf / how fare ye hertely
¶ The frere ariseth vp / ful curteisly
And hire embraceth / in hise armes narwe
And kiste hir swete / and chirteth as a Sparwe 1804
With his lippes / Dame quod he / right wel
As he / that is youre seruant' euery del
Thanked be god / that yow yaf soule and lyf
Yet say I nat this day / so fair a wyf 1808

In al the chirche / god so saue me
¶ Ye god amende defautes / sire quod she
Algates / wel come be ye / by my fey
¶ Graunt mercy dame / this haue I founde alwey
But of youre grete goodnesse / by youre leue
I wolde pray yow / that ye nat yow greue
I wol with Thomas / speke a litel throwe
Thise Curatz / been ful necligent and slowe
To grope tendrely / a conscience
In shrift in prechyng is my diligence
And studie / in Petres wordes / and in Poules
I walke / and fisshe / cristen mennes soules
To yelden Ihesu crist. his propre rente
To sprede his word / is set al myn entente
¶ Now by youre leeue / o deere sire quod she
Chideth hym wel / for Seinte Trinitee
He is as angry / as a Pissemyre [leaf 81]
Thogh that he haue / al that he kan desire
Thogh I hym wrye a nyght and make hym warm
And on hym leye / my leg outher myn arm
He groneth lyk oure boor / lyth in oure Sty
Oother disport right noon of hym haue I
I may nat please hym / in no maner cas
¶ O Thomas Ie vous dy / Thomas / Thomas
This maketh the feend / this moste been amended
Ire is a thyng that hye god defended
And ther-of / wol I speke / a word / or two
¶ Now maister quod the wyf / er þat I go
What wol ye dyne / I wol go ther aboute
¶ Now dame quod he / now Ie vous dy sanz doute
Haue I nat of a Capoñ / but the lyuere
And of youre softe breed / nat but a shyuere
And after that a rosted pigges heed
But þat I nolde / no beest for me were deed
Thanne hadde I with yow / homly suffisaunce.
I am a man / of litel sustenaunce

My Spirit' hath his fostryng' in the bible
The body is ay / so redy and penyble
To wake / that my stomak' is destroyed
I pray yow dame / ye be nat anoyed
Thogh I so freendly / yow my conseil shewe
By god / I wolde nat telle it' but a fewe
¶ Now sire quod she / but o word / er I go
My child is deed / with-Inne thise wykes two
Soone after that ye wente / out of this town
¶ His deeth say I / by reuelacioun
Seith this frere / at hom in oure dortour
I dar wel seyn / that er þat half an hour
After his deeth / I say hym born to blisse
In myn avisiõ / so god me wisse
So dide oure Sexteyn / and oure ffermerer
That han been trewe freres fifty yeer
They may now / god be thanked / of his lone
Maken hir Iubilee / and walke allone
And vp I roos / and al oure Couent eke
With many a teere / triklyng on my cheke
With-outen noyse / or clateryng of belles [leaf 81, back]
Te Deum was oure song' and no thyng elles
Saue that to crist / I seyde an orisõ
Thankynge hym / of his reuelacioñ
ffor sire and dame / trusteth me right wel
Oure orisons / been wel moore effectuel
And moore we seen / of cristes secree thynges
Than bureH folk' al thogh þat they were kynges
We lyue in pouerte / and in abstinence
And bureH folk' in richesse and dispence
Of mete and drynke / and in hir foul delit'
We han this worldes lust' al in despit
Lazar and Dives / lyueden diuersly
And diuerse gerdon' / hadde they ther-by
Who so wol praye / he moot faste and be clene
And fatte his soule / and make his body lene

We fare as seith thapostle / clooth and foode
Suffiseth vs / thogh they be nat ful goode
The clennesse / and the fastyng' of vs freres
Maketh / that crist accepteth oure prayeres
¶ Lo Moyses / fourty dayes / and fourty nyght'
ffasted / er that the heighe god of myght'
Spak with hym / in the mountayne of Synay
With empty wombe / fastynge many a day
Receyued he the lawe / that was writen
With goddes fynger / and Elye wel ye witen
In Mount Oreb / er he hadde any speche
With hye god / that is oure lyues leche
He fasted longe / and was in contemplaunce
Aaron / that hadde the temple in gouernaunce
And eek/ that othere preestes euerichon
In-to the temple / whan they sholde gon
To preye for the peple / and do seruyse
They nolden drynken / in no maner wyse
No drynke / which that myghte hem dronke make
But there in abstinence / preye and wake
Lest that they deyden / tak hede what I seye
But they be sobre / that for the peple preye
War that I seye namoore / for it suffiseth
Oure lord Ih*es*u / as holy writ deuyseth
Yaf vs ensample / of fastyng/ and prayeres [leaf 82]
Ther fore / we mendynantz / we sely freres
Been wedded / to pouerte and continence
To charitee / humblesse and abstinence
To p*er*secucioñ / for rightwisnesse
To wepyng' misericorde and clennesse
And ther-fore may ye se / that oure prayeres
I speke of vs / we mendinantz / we freres
Be to the hye god / moore acceptable
Than youres / with youre festes at the table
ffro Paradys first' if I shal nat lye
Was man out chaced / for his glotonye

And chaast was man / in Paradys certeyn
¶ But herkne Thomas / what I shal seyn
I ne haue no text' of it' as I suppose
But I shal fynde it' in a maner glose
That specially / oure swete lord Ihesus
Spak this by freres / whan he seyde thus
Blessed be they / that poure in Spirit been
And so forth / in the gospel / may ye seen
Wher it be likker / oure professioñ
Or hire / that swymmen in possessioñ
ffy on hir pompe / and hir glotonye
And for hir lewednesse / I hem diffye
Me thynketh / they been lyk Iouynyan
ffat as a whale / and walkyng as a swan
Al vynolent' as Botel in the Spence
Hir preyere is / of ful greet reuerence
Whan they for soules / seye the psalm of Dauit
Lo buf they seye / cor meum eructauit'
Who folweth cristes gospel / and his foore
But we that humble been / and chaast/ and poore
Werkers of goddes word / nat Auditours
Ther fore / right as an hauk / vp at a sours
Vp spryngeth in-to theyr / right so prayeres
Of charitable / and chaste bisy freres
Maken hir sours / to goddes erys two
Thomas / Thomas / so mote I ryde or go
And by that lord / that clepid is Seint yue
Nere thow oure brother / sholdestow nat thryue
[In[1]] oure chapitre / praye we day and nyght' [leaf 82, back] [[1] *Rats*]
To crist' that he thee sende / heele and myght'
Thy body / for to welden hastily
¶ God woot quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I
As help me crist' as I in fewe yeres
Haue spended / vp-on diuerse manere freres
fful many a pound / yet fare I neuere the bet
Certeyn / my good haue I almoost biset'

ffarwel my gold / for it is al ago
¶ The frere answerde / o Thomas doostow so
What nedeth yow / diuerse freres seche
What nedeth hym / that hath a parfit leche
To sechen / othere leches in the town
Youre inconstance / is youre confusioun
Holde ye thanne me / or ellis oure Couent
To preye for yow / been insufficient
Thomas / that Iape / nys nat worth a myte
Youre maladye / is for we han to lyte
A yif that Couent/ half a quarter otes
A yif that Couent .xxiiij. grotes
A yif that frere a peny / and lat hym go
Nay nay Thomas / it may no thyng be so
What is a ferthyng worth / parted in twelue
Lo / ech thyng/ that is oned in hym selue
Is moore strong than whan it is to-scatered
Thomas / of me / thow shalt nat been yflatered
Thow woldest han oure labour / al for noght
The hye god / that al this world hath wrought
Seith / that the werkman / worthy is his hire
Thomas / noght of youre tresor I desire
As for my self / but that al oure Couent
To praye for yow / is ay so diligent
And for to buylden / cristes owene chirche
Thomas / if ye wol lernen for to wirche
Of buyldyng vp of chirches / may ye fynde
If it be good / in Thomas lyf of Inde
Ye lye heere ful of Anger and of Ire
With which / the deuel set youre herte afire
And chiden heere / the sely Innocent/
Youre wyf/ that is so meke and pacient
And ther-fore Thomas / trowe me if thee leste [leaf 83]
Ne stryue nat with thy wyf/ as for thy beste
And bere this word awey / now by thy feith
Touchynge swich thyng lo what the wise man seith

¶ With-Inne thyn ħous / ne be thow no leoñ
To thy subgitz / do noon oppressioñ
Ne make thyne aqueyntances / nat for to flee
And Thomas / yet eft soones I charge thee
Be war from hire / that in thy bosom slepeth
War fro the serpent' that so sleighly crepeth
Vnder the gras / and styngeth subtilly
Be war my sone / and herkne paciently
That twenty thousand men / han lost hir lyues
ffor stryuyng' with hir lemmans and hir wyues
Now sith ẏe han / so holy meke a wyf
What nedeth yow Thomas / to maken stryf/
Their nys ywis / no serpent so cruel
Whan man tret on his tayl / ne half so fel
As womman is / whan she hath caught an Ire
Vengeance is thanne / al that they desire
Ire is a synne / oon of the grete of seuene
Abhomynable / vn-to the god of heuene
And to hym self / it is destruccioñ
This euery lewed viker / or parsoñ
Kan seye / how Ire engendreth homicide
Ire is in sooth / executour of pryde
I koude of Ire / seye so muche sorwe
My tale / sholde laste til to morwe
And ther-fore praye I god / bothe day and nyght
An Irous man / god sende hym litel myght'
It is greet harm / and certes greet pitee
To sette an Irous man in heigh degree

WHilom / ther was an Irous potestat'
As seith Senek' that durynge his estat'
Vp-on a day / out ryden knyghtes two
And as ffortune wolde / that it were so
That oon of hem cam hom / that oother noght'
Anon the knyght' bifore the Iuge is broght'
That seyde thus / thow hast thy felawe slayn
ffor which / I deme thee to the deeth certayn

[1An]d to another knyght' comanded he [leaf 83, back] [1 *Rats*]
Go leed hym to the deeth / I charge thee
And happed / as they wente by the weye
Toward the place / ther he sholde deye
The knyght cam / which men wenden had be deed
Thanne thoghten they / it were the beste reed
To lede hem bothe / to the Iuge agayn
They seyden / lord / the knyght ne hath nat slayn
His felawe / heere he stant hool alyue
¶ Ye shul be deed quod he / so moot I thryue
This is to seyn / bothe oon and two and thre
And to the firste knyght' right thus spak/ he
¶ I dampned thee / thou most algate be deed
And thow also / most nedes lese thyn heed
ffor thow art cause / why thy felawe deyth
And to the thridde knyght' right thus he seith
Thow hast nat doon / that I comanded thee
And thus he dide / do sleen hem alle thre
¶ Irous Cambyses / was eek dronkelewe
And ay delited hym / to been a shrewe
And so bifel / a lord of his meynee
That louede / vertuous moralitee
Seyde on a day / bitwix hem two right thus
¶ A lord is [2]lost if' he be vicius[2] [[2]—[2] *in a later hand*]
And dronkenesse / is eek a foul record
Of any man / and namely in a lord
Ther is ful many an eighe / and many an ere
Awaityng on a lord / he noot nat where
ffor goddes loue / drynk moore attemprely
Wyn maketh man / to lesen wrecchedly
His mynde / and eek his lymes eu*er*ychon
¶ The reuers shaltow se / quod he anon
And preue it' by thyn owene experience
That wyn ne dooth to folk' no swich offence
Ther is no wyn / bireueth me my myght'
Of hond ne foot' ne of myne eyen sight'

And for despit' he drank ful muchel moore
An hundred part' than he hadde doon bifore
And right anon / this Irous cursed wrecche
bifore hym Leet this knyghtes sone / fecche
Comandynge hym / he sholde bifore hym stonde [leaf 81]
And sodeynly / he took his bowe in honde
And vp the streng' he pulled to his ere
And with an arwe / he slow the child right there
Now / wheither haue I / a siker hand or noon
Quod he / is al my myght and mynde agoon
Hath wyn byreued me / myn eye sight
¶ What sholde I telle / thanswere of the knyght'
His sone was slayn / ther is namoore to seye
Beth war ther fore / with lordes how ye pleye
Syngeth Placebo / and I shal if I kan
But if it be / vn-to a poure man
To a poure man / men sholde his vices telle
But nat to a lord / thogh he sholde go to helle
¶ Lo Irous Syrus / thilke Percien
How he destroyed / the ryuer of Gysen
ffor that an hors of his / was dreynt ther-Inne
Whan that he wente / Babiloyne to wynne
He made / that the Ryuer was so smal
That wommen / myghte wade it ouer al
Lo what seyde he / that so wel teche kan
Ne be no felawe / to an Irous man
Ne with no wood man / walke by the weye
Lest thee repente / I wol no ferther seye
¶ Now Thomas leeue brother / lef thyn Ire
Thow shalt me fynde / as Iust' as is a Squyre
Hoold nat the deueles knyf / ay at thyn herte
Thyn angre dooth thee / al to soore smerte
But shewe to me / al thy confessiõ
¶ Nay quod the sike man / by Seint Symoñ
I haue be shryuen this day / at my Curat'
I haue hym toold / hoolly al myn estat'

Nedeth namoore to speke of it seith he
But if me list' of myn humylitee
¶ Yif me thanne of thy gold / to make oure cloystre
Quod he / for many a Muscle / and many an Oystre
Whan othere men / han been ful wel at ęyse
Hath been oure foode / oure Cloystre for to reyse
And yet god woot' vnnethe the fundement/
Parfourned is / ne of oure pauement'
['N]ys nat a tyle / yet' with-Inne oure wones [1 *Rats.* leaf 84, bk]
By god / we owen fourty pound for stones
Now help Thomas / for hym þat harwed helle
Or ellis mote we / oure bookes selle
And if yow lakke / oure predicacioñ
Thanne gooth the world / al to destruccioñ
ffor who so / fro this world / wolde vs bireue
So god me saue / Thomas by youre leue
He wolde bireue / out of the world the sonne
ffor who kan teche / and werchen as we konne
And that is nat' of litel tyme quod he
But' sith Elie was / or Elize
Han freres been / that fynde I of record
In charitee / thonked be oure lord
Now Thomas / help for Seinte charitee
And down anon / he set hym on his knee
¶ This sike man / weex wel neigh wood for Ire
He wolde / that the frere / hadde been afire
With his false dissimulacioñ
Swich thyng/ as is in my possessioñ
Quod he /' that may I yeue and noon oother
Ye sey me thus / how that I am youre brother
¶ Ye certes quod the frere / trusteth wel
I took oure dame / oure lettre with oure sel
¶ Now wel quod he / and som what' shal I yeue
Vn-to youre holy Couent' whil I lyue
And in thyn hand / thow shalt it han anon
On this condicioñ / and oother noon

That thow departe it so / my deere brother
That euery frere / haue as muche as oother
This shaltow swere / on thy profession̄
With-outen fraude / or cauelacion̄ 2136
¶ I swere it quod this frere / vp-on my feith
And ther with al / his hand in his he leith
Lo here my feith / in me / shal be no lak
¶ Now thanne put thyn hand / down by my bak' 2140
Seyde this man / and grope wel bihynde
Bynethe my buttok' there shaltow fynde
A thyng' that I haue hyd in pryuetee
¶ A thoghte this frere / that shal go with me 2144
And down his hand / he launcheth to the clifte [leaf 85]
In hope / for to fynde there a yifte
And whan this sike man / felte this frere
Aboute his tuwel / grope there and heere 2148
Amydde his hand / he leet the frere a fart'
Ther is no capul / drawyng in a Cart'
That myghte han late a fart' of swich a sown
¶ The frere vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun 2152
A false cherl quod he / for goddes bones
This hastow for despit' doon for the nones
Thow shalt abye this fart' if þat I may
His meynee / which that herden this affray 2156
Cam lepyng In / and chaced out the frere
And forth he gooth / with a ful angry cheere
And fette his felawe / ther as lay his stoor
He looked / as he were a wilde boor 2160
He grynt with his teeth / so was he wrooth
A sturdy paas / doun to the court he gooth
Wher as ther woned / a man of greet honour
To whom / that he was alwey confessour 2164
This worthy man / was lord of that village
This frere cam / as he were in a rage
Where as this lord / sat etyng' at his boord
Vnnethe / myghte the frere speke a woord 2168

Til atte laste / he seyde / god yow see
¶ This lord gan looke / and seyde benedicitee
What frere Iohn / what manere world is this
I se wel / that som thyng' ther is amys
Ye looken / as the wode were ful of theuys
Sit doun anon / and tel me what youre grief is
And it shal been amended / if I may
¶ I haue quod he / had a despit to day
God yelde yow / adown in youre village
That in this world / ther nys so poure a page
That he nolde haue / abhomynacioun
Of that' I haue receyued in youre toun
And yet/ ne greueth me / no thyng so soore
As that this olde cherl / with lokkes hoore
Blasphemed hath / oure hooly Couent eke
¶ Now maister quod this lord / I yow biseke
No maister sire quod he / but seruytour [leaf 85, back]
Thogh I haue had in scole / that honour
God liketh nat' that Raby men vs calle
Neither in Market' nyn youre large halle
¶ No force quod he / but tel me al youre grief
¶ Sire quod this frere / an odious meschief
This day bityd is / to myn ordre and me
And so *par* consequens / to ech degree
Of holy chirche / god amende it soone
¶ Sire quod the lord / ye woot what is to doone
Distempre yow nogh' ye be my confessour
Ye been the salt of therthe / and the sauour
ffor goddes loue / youre pacience ye holde
Tel me youre grief/ and he anon hym tolde
As ye han herd biforn / ye woot wel what
The lady of the hous / ay stille sat'
Til she hadde herd / what the frere sayde
¶ Ey goddes moder quod she / blisful mayde
Is ther aught ellis / tel me feithfully
¶ Ma dame quod he / how thynketh yow ther by

¶ How þat me thynketh quod she / so god me spede
I seye / a cherl / hath doon a cherles dede
What sholde I seye / god lat hym neuere thee
His sike heed / is ful of vanytee
I holde hym / in a manere frenesye
¶ Madame quod he / by god I shal nat lye
But I / on oother wise / may be wreke
I shal diffame hym / ouer al wher I speke
The false blasphemour / that charged me
To parte / that wol nat departed be
To euery man yliche / with meschaunce
¶ The lord sat stille / as he were in a traunce
And in his herte / he rolled vp and down
How hadde this cherl / ymaginacioun
To shewe swich a probleme / to the frere
Neuere erst er now / herde I swich matere
I trowe the deuel / putte it in his mynde
In Arsmetrik' shal ther no man fynde
Bifore this day / of swich a questiõ
Who sholde / make a demonstracioñ
That euery man sholde han / ylike his part/ [leaf 86]
As of a soun / or sauour / of a fart'
O nyce prowde cherl / I shrewe his face
¶ Lo sires quod the lord / with harde grace
Who euere herde / of swich a thyng' er now
To euery man ylike / tel me how
It is an inpossible / it may nat be
Ey nyce cherl / god lat hym neuere thee
The rumblyng of a fart' and euery soun
Nys but of Eyr / reuerberacioun
And there it wasteth / lite and lite awey
Ther nys no man / kan deme by my fey
If that it were / departed equally
What lo my cherl / lo yet how shrewedly
Vn-to my confessour / to day he spak/
I holde hym certeynly / demonyak'

Now ete youre mete / and lat the cherl go pleye
Lat hym go hange hym self/ a deuel weye

[*The Solution of the "Probleme" by the Lord's Squire-and-Carver. No break in the MS.*]

¶ Now stood / the lordes Squyer at the boord
That carf his mete / and herde word by woord
Of alle thyng' of which I haue yow sayd
¶ My lord quod he / be ye nat yuele apayd
I koude telle / for a gowne clooth
To yow sire frere / so ye be nat wrooth
How that this fart' sholde euene ydeled be
Among youre Couent' if it liked me
¶ Tel quod the lord / and thow shalt haue anon
A gowne clooth / by god and by Seint Iohn
¶ My lord quod he / whan that the weder is fair
With-outen wynd / or *per*turbynge of Air
Lat brynge a Cartwheel / heere in-to this halle
But looke that it haue / his spokes alle
Twelf spokes / hath a Cartwheel comunly
And brynge me thanne twelf freres / woot ye why
For thrittene / is a Couent' / as I gesse
Youre confessour heere / for his worthynesse
Shal *par*fourne vp / the nombre of this Couent'
Thanne shal they knele adown / by oon assent'
And to euery spokes ende / in this manere
fful sadly / leye his nose / shal a frere
Youre noble Confessour / ther god hym saue [leaf 86, back]
Shal holde his nose / vp right vnder the Naue
Thanne shal this cherl / with baly / stif and togh't'
As any tabour / hider been ybrogh't'
And sette hym on the wheel / right of this Cart'
Vp on the Naue / and make hym lete a fart'
And ye shal seen / on *per*il of my lyf
By proue / which that is demonstratyf

That equally / the soun of it wol wende
And eek the stynk/ vn-to the spokes ende
Saue / that this worthy man / youre Confessour
By cause / he is a man of great honour
Shal han the firste fruyt as reson is
The noble vsage of freres / yet is this
The worthy men of hem / shul first be serued
And certeynly / he hath it wel disserued
He hath to day / taught vs so muchel good
With prechyng in the pulput ther he stood
That I may vouche sauf / I seye for me
He hadde the firste smel / of fartes thre
And so wolde / al his Couent hardily
He bereth hym / so faire and holily
¶ The lord / the lady / ech man / saue the frere
Seyden / that Iankyn spak in this matere
As wel / as Euclyde / or Protholomee
Touchynge the cherl / they seyde subtiltee
And hy wit made hym speke / as he spak
He nys no fool / ne no demonyak
And Iankyn hath y-wonne / a newe gowne
My tale is doon / we been almoost at towne

¶ Here endeth the Somnours tale ☙

[*A blank leaf follows in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth The Prologe of the Monkes ta[le[1]]:
[1 Bitton only rats.]

WHan ended was my tale / of Melibee [leaf 88]
And of Prudence / and hire benygnitee 3080
Oure hoost seyde / as I am feithful man
And by / that precious corpus Madrian
I hadde leuere / than a barel Ale
That goode lief my wyf / hadde herd this tale 3084
She nys no thyng' of swich pacience
As was / this Melibeus wyf Prudence
By goddes bones / whan I bete my knaues
She bryngeth me / the grete clobbed staues 3088
And crieth / slee the dogges euerichon
And breke hem / bothe bak and euery bon
And if þat / any neighebore / of myne
Wol nat in chirche / to my wyf enclyne 3092
Or be so hardy / to hire to trespace
Whan she cometh / she raumpeth in my face
And crieth / false coward wrek thy wyf
By corpus bones / I wol haue thy knyf 3096
And thow shalt haue my distaf/ and go spynne
ffro day to nyght' right thus she wol bigynne
Allas she seith / þat euere þat I was shape
To wedden a Milksope / or a coward Ape 3100
That wol been ouer-lad / of euery wight'
Thow darst nat stonden / by thy wyues right'
This is my lif' but if þat I wol fighte
And out at dore / anoon I moot me dighte 3104
Or ellis I am but lost' but if þat I
Be lyk a wilde leoñ / fool hardy
I woot wel / she wol do me sle som day
Som neighebore / and thanne go my way 3108
ffor I am perilous / with knyf in honde
Al be it' that I dar nat hire withstonde

ffor she is big in armes / by my feith
That shal he fynde / þat hire mysdooth / or seith
But lat vs passe awey / fro this matere
¶ My lord the Monk quod he / be myrie of cheere
ffor / ye shul telle a tale trewely [leaf 88, back]
Lo / Rouchestre / stant heer fasteby
Ride forth myn owene lord / brek nat oure game
But by my trouthe / I knowe nat youre name
Wher shal I calle yow / my lord Dann Iohñ
Or dann Thomas / or ellis Dann Albon
Of what hous be ye / by youre fader kyn
I vow to god / thow hast a ful fair skyn
It is a gentil pasture / ther thow goost
Thow art nat lyk a penannt or a goost
Vp-on my feith / thow art som Officer
Som worthy Sexteyn / or som Celerer
ffor by my fader soule / as to my doom
Thow art a maister / whan thou art at hom
No poure Cloistrer / ne no novys
But a gouernour / wily and wys
And ther with al / of brawnes & of bones
A wel farynge persone / for the nones
I prey god / yeue hym confusioñ
That first thee broghte / vn-to Religioñ
Thow woldest han been a tredefoul aright
Haddestow / as greet a leue as thow hast myght
To perfourne / al thy lust in engendrure
Thow haddest bigeten / ful many a creature
Allas / why werestow so wyd a cope
God yeue me sorwe / but and I were a Pope
Nat oonly thow / but euery myghty man
Thogh he were shore / ful hye vp on his pan
Sholde haue a wyf for al the world is lorn
Religion / hath take vp al the corn
Of tredyng and we borel men been shrympes
Of feble trees / ther comen wrecched ympes

This maketh / þat oure heires beth so sklendre
And feble / þat they may nat wel engendre
This maketh / þat oure wyues wole assaye
Religious folk / for ye mowe bettre paye
Of Venus paiementz / than may we
God woot' no lussheburgh payen ye
But be nat wrooth my Lord / thogh þat I ploye
fful ofte in game / a sooth I haue herd seye
¶ This worthy Monk / took al in pacience [leaf 89]
And seyde / I wol doon al my diligence
As fer / as sowneth in to honestee
To telle yow a tale / or two / or three
And if yow list' to herkne hiderward
I wol yow seyn / the lyf of Seint Edward
Or ellis first' tragedies wol I telle
Of whiche / I haue an hundred in my Celle
Tragedie is to seyn / a certeyn storie
As olde bokes / maken vs memorie
Of hym / þat stood in greet *prosperitee*
And is yfallen / out of heigh degree
In to myserie / and endeth wrecchedly
And they been / versified comunly
Of .vj. feet' whiche men clepyn Exametron
In prose eek' been endited many oon
And eek in metre / in many a sondry wise
Lo this declaryng' oghte ynogh suffise
¶ Now herkneth / if yow liketh for to heere
But first' I yow biseke / in this matere
Though I by ordre / telle nat thise thynges
Be it of Popes / Emperours / or Kynges
After hir ages / as men writen fynde
But telle hem / som bifore / and som bihynde
As it now cometh / vn-to my remembrance
Haueth me excused / of myn ignorance

¶ Here bigynneth the Monkes tale.

I Wol biwaille / in manere of Tragedie
The harm of hem / that stoode in heigh degree
And fillen so / that ther nas no remedie
To brynge hem / out of hire Aduersitee
ffor certeyn / whan þat ffortune list to flee
Ther may no man / the cours of hire withholde
Lat no man triste / on blynd prosperitee
Beth war / by thise ensamples trewe and olde

[*Lucifer.*]

AT lucifer / thogh he an Aungel were [leaf 89, back]
And nat a man / at hym I wol bigynne
ffor thogh ffortune / may noon Aungel dere
ffrom heigh degree / yet fil he for his synne
Doun in to Helle / where as he yet is Inne
O Lucifer / brightest of Aungels alle
Now artow Sathanas / that mayst nat twynne
Out of Miserie / in which þat thou art falle

[*Adam.*]

Lo Adam in the feld of Damyssene [*this stanza is in the margin in a later 15th-century hand*]
With godes owne fynger wrowt was he . .
And nat bygeten of mannes sperme vnclene . .
And welte al paradiis sauyng o tree . .
Had neuer wordly man so hey degre . .
As Adam til he for mysgouernance . .
Was dryue owt of his hey prosperitee . .
To labour and to helle and to meschance

[*Sampson.*]

LO Sampson / which that was anunciat' Sampson.
By the Aungel / longe er his natiuitee
And was / to god almyghty consecrat'
And stood in noblesse / whil that he myghte see
Was neuere swich another / as was he
To speke of strengthe / and ther-*with* hardynesse
But to hise wyues / tolde he his secree
Thurgh which / he slow hym self for wrecchednesse

¶ Sampson / this noble almyghty champioñ
With-outen wepne / saue hise hondes tweye
He slow / and al to-rente the leoñ
Toward his weddyng' walkynge by the weye
His false wyf / koude hym so plese and preye
Til she his conseil knew / and she vntrewe
Vn-to his foos / his conseil gan biwreye
And hym forsook/ and took another newe

¶ Thre hundred foxes / took Sampson for Ire
And alle hir tayles / he togydre bond
And sette the foxes tayles / alle on fire
ffor he on euery tayl / hadde knyt a brond
And they brende / alle the cornes in that Lond
And alle hire Olyueris / and Vynes eke
A thousand men / he slow with his hond
And hadde no wepne / but an Asses cheke

¶ Whan they were slayn / so thursted hym / þat he
Was wel ny lorn / for which he gan to preye
That god / wolde on his peyne / haue som pitee
And sende hym drynke / or ellis moste he deye
And of this Asses cheke / that was dreye
Out of a wang' tooth / sprang anon a welle
Of which he drank ynogh / shortly to seye
Thus heelp hym god / as Iudicum kan telle

¶ By verray force / at Gazan / on a nyght' [leaf 90]
Maugree Philistiens / of that Citee
The gates of the toun / he hath vp plight
And on his bak' ycaried hem hath he
Hye on an hilt / where as men myght hem se
O noble almyghty Sampsoñ / leef and deere
Had thow nat toold / to wommen thy secree
In al this world / ne hadde been thy peere

¶ This Sampsoñ / neuere Ciser drank ne wyn
Ne on his heed / cam Rasour noon ne shere
By precept' of the Messager deuyn
ffor alle his strengthes / in his herys were
And fully .xx. wynter / yeer by yere
He hadde of Israel / the gouernance
But soone / shal he wepe many a teere
ffor wommen / shul hym bryngen to meschaunce

¶ Vn-to his lemman Dalida / he tolde
That in his herys / al his strengthe lay
And falsly / to his fomen she hym solde
And slepynge in hir barm / vp on a day
She made to clippe / or shere his heer away
And made his fomen / al this craft espien
And whan þat they / hym fond in this array
They bounde hym faste / and putten out his eyen

¶ But/ er his heer / was clipped or yshaue
Ther was no bond / with which / men myghte hym bynde
But now is he / in prisone in a Caue
Where as they made hym / at the querne grynde
O noble Sampsoñ / strengest of mankynde
O whilom / Iuge in glorie / and in richesse
Now / maystow wepen / with thyne eyen blynde
Sith thow fro wele / art falle in wrecchednesse

¶ The ende of this caytif was as I shal seye
His fomen / made a feste vp-on a day
And made hym as hire fool / bifore hem pleye
And this was / in a temple of greet array
But atte laste / he made a foul affray
ffor he two pilers shook / and made hem falle
And doun fil temple and al / and there it lay
And slow hym self / and eek his fomen alle

¶ This is to seyn / the Prynces euerychon [leaf 90, back]
And eek thre thousand bodies / were ther slayn
With fallyng of the grete temple of stoon
Of Sampson / now wol I namoore sayn
Beth war by this ensample / old and playn
That no men / telle hir conseil / til hir wyues
Of swich thyng as they wolde han secree fayn
If þat it touche / hir lymes / or hir lyues

[*Hercules.*]

Of hercules / the souereyn conquerour ¶ Hercules.
Syngen hise werkes / laude and heigh renoun
ffor in his tyme / of strengthe he was the flour
He slow / and rafte the skyn fro the leoun
He of Centauros / leyde the boost adown
He Arpies slow / the cruel briddes felle
The golden Apples / rafte of the dragoun
He drow out Cerberus / the hound of helle

¶ He slow the cruel tyrant Busirus
And made his hors / to frete hym flessh and bon
He slow the firy serpent venymus
Of Achilois two hornes / he brak oon
And he slow Cakus / in a Caue of stoon
He slow the geant. Antheus the stronge
He slow the grisly boor / and that anon
And bar the heuene / on his nekke longe

¶ Was neuere wight' sith þat this world bigan
That slew so manye monstres / as dide he
Thurgh-out this wide world / his name ran
What for his strengthe / and for his heigh bountee
And euery Reawme / wente he for to se
He was so strong' þat no man myghte hym lette
At bothe the worldes endes / seith Trophee / ¶ Ille vates Caldeorum Trophens
In stede of boundes / he a piler sette

¶ A lemman / hadde this noble champioñ
That highte Dian[i]ra / fressh as May
And as thise clerkes / maken mencion
She hath hym sent a sherte / fressh and gay
Allas this sherte / allas and weylaway
Enuenymed was / so subtilly with alle
That er þat he / hadde wered it half a day
It made his flessh / al from hise bones falle

¶ But natheles / somme clerkes hire excusen [leaf 91]
By oon þat highte Nessus / þat it maked
Be as be may / I wol hire noght accusen
But on his bak' the sherte he wered al naked
Til þat his flessh / was for the venym blaked
And whan he say / noon oother remedie
In hote coles / he hath hym seluen raked
ffor with no venym / deigned hym to dye

¶ Thus starf / this worthy myghty Hercules
Lo who may truste on ffortune / any throwe
ffor hym þat folweth / al this world of prees
Er he be war / is ofte yleyd ful lowe
fful wys is he / þat kan hym seluen knowe
Beth war / for whan þat ffortune list to glose
Thanne waiteth she / hir man to ouerthrowe
By swich a wey / as he wolde leest suppose

[*Nebuchadnezzar.*]

The myghty trone / the precious tresor / Nabugodonosor
The glorious ceptre / and roial maiestee
That hadde / the kyng Nabugodonosor
With tonge / vnnethe / may discryued be
He twies / wan Ierusalem the Citee
The vessel of the temple / he with hym ladde
At Babiloigne / was his souereyn see
In which / his glorie / and his delit he hadde

¶ The faireste children / of the blood roial
Of Israel / he leet do gelde anon
And maked ech of hem / to been his thral
Amonges othere / Danyel was oon
That was / the wiseste child of euerychoon
ffor he the dremes / of the kyng expowned
Ther as in Chaldeye / clerk/ ne was ther noon
That wiste / to what fyn his dremes sowned

¶ This proude kyng leet make a Statue of gold
Sixty cubites long and Seuene in brede
To which ymage / he bothe yong and old
Comanded to loute / and haue in drede
Or in a fourneys / ful of flambes rede
He shal be brend / that wolde noght obeye
But neuere / wolde assente to that dede
Danyel / ne hise yonge felawes tweye

¶ This kyng of kynges / proud was and elat [leaf 91, back]
He wende / that god / þat sit in magestee
Ne myghte hym nat bireue / of his estat
But sodeynly / he loste his dignytee
And lyk a beest hym semed for to be
And eet hey as an Oxe / and lay ther oute
In reyn / with wilde beestes walked he
Til certeyn tyme / was ycome aboute

¶ And lyk an Egles fetheres / wax hise herys
Hise nayles / lyk a briddes clawes weere
Til god relessed hym / a *cer*teyn yerys
And yaf hym wit' and thanne *with* many a teere
He thanked god / and euere his lyf in feere
Was he to doon amys / or moore trespace
And til that tyme / he leyd was on his beere
He knew / that god / was ful of myght & *grace*

[*Belshazzar.*]

¶ His sone / which that highte Balthasar / Balthasar /
That heeld the regne / after his fader day
He by his fader / koude noght be war
ffor proud he was / of herte and of array
And eek an ydolastre / was he ay
His hye estat / assured hym in pryde
But ffortune caste hym down / and ther he lay
And sodeynly / his regne gan dyuyde

¶ A feste he made / vn-to hise lordes alle
Vp-on a tyme / and made hem blithe be
And thanne hise Officers / gan he calle
Gooth bryngeth forth / the vessels quod he
Whiche that my fader / in his prosp*er*itee
Out of the temple of Ierusalem / birafte
And to oure hye goddes / thanke we
Of honour / that oure eldres / *with* vs lafte

¶ His wyf / hise lordes / and hise concubynes
Ay dronken / whil hir*e* appetites laste
Out of thise noble vessels / sondry wynes
And on a wal / this kyng' hise eyen caste
And say an hand armlees / that wroot ful faste
ffor feere of which / he quook / and siked soore
This hand / *þat* Balthasar so soore agaste
Wroot' Mane techel phares / and namoore

¶ In al that land / Magicien was noon [leaf 92]
That koude expounde / what that lettre mente
But Danyel / expowned it anoon
And seyde / Kyng' god to thy fader lente
Glorie / and honour / regne / tresor / rente
And he was proud / and no thyng god ne dradde
And ther-fore / god greet wreche vp-on hym sente
And hym birefte / the regne þat he hadde

¶ He was out cast' of mannes compaignye
With Asses / was his habitacioñ
And eet hey as a beest' in weet and drye
Til þat he knew / by grace / and by resoñ
That god of heuene / han domynacioñ
Ouer euery regne / and euery creature
And thanne / hadde god of hym compassioñ
And hym restored / his regne and his figure

¶ Eke / thow that art his sone / art proud also
And knowest' Alle thise thynges verraily
And art rebel to god / and art his fo
Thow drank eek / of his vessel boldely
Thy wyf eke / and thy wenches synfully
Dronke of the same vessels / sondry wynys
And heriest false goddes cursedly
Therfore to thee / yshapen ful greet pyne is

¶ This hand was sent fro god / that on the wal
Wroot Mane techel phares / truste me
Thy regne is doon / thow weyest noght at al
Dyuyded is thy regne / and it shal be
To Medes and to Perses / yeuen quod he
And thilke same nyght' this kyng was slawe
And Darius / occupieth his degree
Though he ther to / hadde neither right ne lawe

¶ Lordynges / ensample heer-by may ye take
How that in lordshipe / is no sikernesse
ffor whan ffortune / wol a man forsake
She bereth awey / his regne and his richesse
And eke hise freendes / bothe moore and lesse
ffor what man / þat hath freendes thurgh ffortune
Mishape / wol make hem enemys I gesse
This *prouer*be / is ful sooth / and ful co*m*mune

[*Zenobia.*]

CEnobia / of Palymerie queene [leaf 92, back]
As writen Perciens / of hir noblesse
So worthy was in Armes / and so keene
That no wight' passed hire in hardynesse
Ne in lynage / ne oother gentilesse
Of kynges blood of Perce / is she descended
I sey nat' þat she hadde moost fairnesse
But of hir shape / she myghte nat been amended

¶ ffrom hire childhede / I fynde þat she fledde
Office of wommen / and to wode she wente
And many / a wilde hertes blood she shedde
With Arwes brode / that she to hem sente
She was so swift' þat she anoon hem hente
And whan þat she was elder / she wolde kille
Leons / Leopardes / and Beres al torente
And in hir Armes / welde hem at hir wille

¶ Sche dorste / wilde beestes dennes seke
And rennen in the montaynes / al the nyght'
And slepen vnder the bussh̄ / and she koude eke
Wrastlen / by verray force / and verray myght'
With any yong man / were he neuer so wight'
Ther myghte no thyng' in hir armes stonde
She kepte hir maydenhede / from euery wight'.
To no man / deigned hire to be bonde

¶ But atte laste / hir freendes han hire maryed
To Onedake / a prynce of that contree
Al were it so / that she hem longe taryed
And ye shal vnderstande / how þat he
Hadde swiche fantasies / as hadde she
But nathelees / whan they weere knyt in simul feere
They lyued / in ioye / and in felicitee
ffor ech of hem / hadde oother lief and deere

¶ Saue o thyng' that she wolde neuere assente
By no wey / that he sholde by hire lye
But ones / for it was hir pleyn entente
To haue a child / the world to multiplye
And also soone / as that she myghte espye
That she was nat with childe / with that dede
Thanne wolde she suffren hym doon his fantasye
Eft soone / and noght but ones / out of drede

¶ And if she were with childe / at thilke cast' [leaf 93]
Namoore / sholde he pleyen thilke game
Til fully / .xl. dayes weren past'
Thanne wolde she ones / suffre hym do the same
Al were this Onedake / wilde / or tame
He gat namoore of hire / for thus she seydo
It was to wyues / lecherie and shame
In oother cas / if þat men with hem pleydo

¶ Two sones / by this Onedake hadde she
The whiche she kepte / in vertu and lettrure
But now / vn-to oure tale turne we
I seye / so worshipful a creature
And wys ther-with / and large with mesure
So penyble in the werre / and curteis eke
Ne moore labour / myghte in werre enduro
Was noon / thogh al this world men sholde seke

¶ Hir riche array / ne myghte nat be toold
As wel in vessel / as in hire clothyng'
She was al clad / in perree and in gold
And eek she lafte noght' for noon huntyng' 3499
To haue / of sondry tonges ful knowyng'
Whan þat she leyser hadde / and for to entende
To lerne bookes / was al hir likyng'
How she in vertu / myghte hir lyf despende 3500

¶ And shortly / of this storie for to trete
So doughty was hire housbonde / and eek she
That they conquered / manye regnes grete
In thorient' with many a fair Citee 3504
Appertenant' vn-to the magestee
Of Rome / and with strong hond / heeld hem ful faste
Ne neuere myghte / hir fomen / doon hem flee
Ay / whil that Onedakes dayes laste 3508

¶ Hir batailles / who so list hem for to rede
Agayn Sapor the kyng/ and othere mo
And how / þat al this proces / fil in dede
Why she conquered / and what title ther to 3512
And after / of hire meschief and hire wo
How that she was / biseged and ytake
Lat hym / vn-to my maister Petrak go
That writ ynow of this / I vndertake 3516

¶ Whan Onedake was deed / she myghtily [leaf 93, back]
The regnes heeld / and with hire propre hond
Agayns hir foos / she faught so cruelly
That ther nas kyng' ne Prince in al that lond 3520
That he nas glad / if he þat grace fond
That she ne wolde / vp-on his land werreye
With hire / they made alliance by bond
To been in pees / and lete hire ryde and pleye 3524

¶ The Emperour of Rome / Claudius
Ne hym biforn / the Romayn Galien
Ne dorsten neuere / been so corageus
Ne noon Ermyn / ne noon Egipcien
No Surryen / ne noon Arabien
With-Inne the feeldes / þat dorste with hire fighte
Lest þat she wolde / hem with hir handes slen
Or with hire meynee / putten hem to flighte

¶ In kynges habit' wenten hire sones two
As heires / of hir fadres regnes alle
And Hermanno / and Thymalao
Hir names weere / as Persiens hem calle
But ay ffortune / hath in hire hony galle
This myghty queene / may no while endure
ffortune / out of hir regne made hire falle
To wrecchednesse / and to mysauenture

¶ Aurelian / whan þat the gouernance
Of Rome / cam in-to hise handes tweye
He shoope / vp-on this queene / to doon vengeance
And with his legions / he took his weye
Toward Cenobie / and shortly for to seye
He made hire flee / and atte laste hire hente
And fettred hire / and eek hire children tweye
And wan the land / and hoom to Rome he wente

¶ Amonges othere thynges / that he wan
His Chaar / þat was with gold wroght & perree
This grete Romayn / this Aurelian
Hath with hym lad / for þat men sholde it see
Biforn his triumphe / walketh she
With gilte cheynes / on hire nekke hangynge
Corowned was she / as after hire degree
And ful of perree / charged hir clothynge

¶ Allas ffortune / she that whilom was [leaf 94.
Dredeful / to kynges / and to Emperoures
Now gawreth al the peple / on hire allas
And she that helmed was / in starke stoures 3560
And wan by force / townes stronge and toures
Shal on hire heed / now were a vitremyte
And she þat bar / the Ceptre ful of floures
Shal bere a distaf hire cost for to quyte 3564

[The modern instances which should come here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

[*Nero.*]

Al though / that Nero were vicius / De Nerone
As any feend / that lyth ful lowe adown 3654
Yet he / as telleth vs Swetonius
This wide world / hadde in subieccioun 3656
Bothe Est and West North / and Septemtrioun
Of Rubies / Saphires / and of perles white
Were alle hise clothes / browded vp and doun
ffor he in gemmes / greetly gan delite 3660

¶ Moore delicat moore pompous of array
Moore proud / was neuere Emperour than he
That ilke clooth / that he hadde weryd o day
After that tyme / he nolde it neuere see 3664
Nettes of gold threed / hadde he greet plentee
To fisshen in Tybre / whan hym liste pleye
Hise lustes were al lawe / in his decree
ffor ffortune / as his freend / hym wolde obeye 3668

¶ He Rome brende / for his delicacie
The Senatours / he slow vp-on a day
To heere / how þat men wolde wepe & crye
And slow his brother / and by his suster lay 3672
His moder he made / in pitous array
ffor he hire wombe slytte / to biholde
Where he conceyued was / so weilaway
That he so litel / of his moder tolde 3676

¶ No teere out of hise eyen / for that sighte
Ne cam / but seyde / a fair womman was she
Greet wonder is / how þat he koude / or myghte
Be domesman / of hire dede beautee
The wyn to bryngen hym / comanded he
And drank anoon / noon oother wo he made
Whan myght is ioyned / vn-to crueltee
Allas to depe / wol the venym wade

[¶] In youthe / a maister hadde this Emperour [leaf 94, back]
To teche hym lettrure / and curteisye
ffor of moralitee / he was the flour
As in his tyme / but if bookes lye
And whil this maister / hadde of hym maistrye
He maked hym / so louyng and so souple
That longe tyme it was / er tirannye
Or any vice / dorste in hym vncouple

¶ This Seneca / of which þat I deuyse
By cause Nero / hadde of hym swich drede
ffor he fro vices / wolde hym ay chastise
Discretly / as by word / and nat by dede
Sire wolde he seyn / an Emperour moot nede
Be vertuous / and hate tirannye
ffor which he in a bath / made hym to blede
On bothe hise armes / til he moste dye

¶ This Nero / hadde eek/ of acustumance
In youthe / agayns his maister for to rise
Which afterward / hym thoughte a greet greuance
Ther-fore / he made hym dyen in this wise
But nathelees / this Seneca the wise
Chees / in a bath / to dye in this manere
Rather than han / another tormentrise
And thus hath Nero / slayn his maister deere

¶ Now fil it so / that ffortune liste no lenger
The hye pride of Nero / to cherice
ffor thogh þat he was strong/ yet was she strenger
She thoghte thus / by god I am to nyce
To sette a man / that is fulfild of vice
In heigh degree / and Emperour hym calle
By god / out of his sete I wol hym trice
Whan he leest weneth / sonnest shal he falle

¶ The peple roos / vp on hym / on a nyght'
ffor his defaute / and whan he it espied
Out of his dores / anon he hath hym dight'
Allone / and there he wende han been allyed
He knokked faste / and ay the moore he cryed
The faster shette they / the dores alle
ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he dyed
And wente his wey / no lenger dorste he calle

¶ The peple cryde / and rombled vp and doun [leaf 95]
That *with* hise erys / herde he / how they seyde
Where is this false tirant' this Neroun
ffor fere almoost' out of his wit he breyde
And to hise goddes / pitously he preyde
ffor socour / but it myghte noght bityde
ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he deyde
And ran in to a gardyn / hym to hyde

¶ And in this gardyn / foond he cherles tweye
That seten by a fyr / greet' and reed
And to thise cherlis two / he gan to preye
To sleen hym / and to girden of his heed
That to his body / whan þat he were deed
Were no despit ydoon / for his defame
Hym self he slow / he koude no bettre reed
Of which / ffortune / lough and haddo a game

[*Holofernes.*]

¶ Was neuere Capitayn / vnder a kyng' / De Oloferno
That regnes mo / putte in subieccioun
Ne strenger was in feeld / of alle thyng'
As in his tyme / ne gretter of renoun
Ne moore pompous / in heigh presumpcioun
Than Oloferne / which ffortune ay kiste
So likerously / and ladde hym vp and doun
Til þat his heed was of / er that he wiste

¶ Nat oonly / that this world hadde hym in awe
ffor lesynge / of richesse / or libertee
But made euery man / reneyen his lawe
Nabugodonosor / was god seyde he
Noon oother god / sholde adoured be
Agayns this heste / no wight dorste trespace
Saue in Bethulia / a strong Citee // Et fecerunt filij Israel / secundum quod constituerat eis sacerdos domini Eliachym
Where Eliachym / a preest was of that place

¶ But tak kepe / of the deeth of Oloferne
Amydde his oost' he dronke lay a nyght'
With-Inne his tente / large as is a berne
And yet' for al his pompe / and al his myght'
Iudith a womman / as he lay vpright'
Slepynge / his heed of smoot' and from his tente
fful pryuely she stal / from euery wight'
And with his heed / vn-to hir toun she wente

[*Antiochus.*]

What nedeth it' of kyng Anthiochus [leaf 95, back]
To telle / his hye Roial magestee
His hye pryde / hise werkes venymus
ffor swich another / was ther noon as he
Reed which that he was / in Machabee
And reed / the proude wordes / þat he seyde
And why he fil / fro heigh prosperitee
And in an Hille / how wrecchedly he deyde

¶ ffortune / hym hadde enchaunted so in pride
That verraily / he wende he myghte attayne
Vn-to the sterres / vp on euery syde
And in balance / weyen ech montayne
And alle the floodes / of the see restrayne
And goddes peple / hadde he moost in hate
Hem wolde he sleen / in torment and in payne
Wenynge / that god ne myghte / his pryde abate

¶ And for that Nichanore / and Thymothe
Of Iewes / weren venquysshed myghtily
Vn-to the Iewes / swich an hate hadde he
That he bad greithe his Chaar ful hastily
And swoor / and seyde ful despitously
Vn-to Ierusalem / he wolde eft soone
To wreken his Ire / on it ful cruelly
But of his purpos / he was let ful soone

¶ God for his manace / hym so soore smoot
With invisible wounde / ay incurable
That in hise guttes / carf it so and boot
That hise peynes / weren inportable
And certeinly / the wreche was resonable
ffor many a mannes guttes / dide he peyne
But from his purpos / cursed and dampnable
ffor al his smert he wolde hym nat restreyne

¶ But bad anon / apparaillen his hoost
And sodeynly / er he was of it war
God daunted / al his pride / and al his boost
ffor he / so soore fil / out of his char
That it hise lymes / and his skyn totar
So þat / he neither myghte go ne ryde
But in a chayer / men aboute hym bar
Al forbrused / bothe bak and syde

¶ The wreche of god / hym smoot so cruelly [leaf 96]
That thurgh his body / wikked wormes crepte
And ther with al / he stank so horribly
That noon / of al his meynee þat hym kepte
Wheither so he wook/ or ellis slepte
Ne myghte noght for stynk of hym endure
Is this meschief / he wayled and eek wepte
And knew god / lord of euery creature

¶ To al his hoost and to hym self also
fful wlatsom / was the stynk of his careyne
No man / ne myght hym bere to ne fro
And in this stynk and this horrible peyne
He starf ful wrecchedly / in a monteyne
Thus hath this Robbour / and this homycide
That many a man / made to wepe and pleyne
Swich gerdon / as bilongeth vn-to pryde

[*Alexander the Great.*]

The Storie of Alisandre / is so commune / De Alexandro
That euery wight þat hath discrecioñ
Hath herd som-what or al / of his fortune
This wide world / as in conclusioñ
He wan by strengthe / or for hys hye renoñ
They were glad / for pees vn-to hym sende
The pryde / of man and beest / he leyde adoun
Where so he cam / vn-to the worldes ende

¶ Comparison / myghte neuere yet ben maked
Bitwixe hym / and another Conquerour
ffor al this world / for drede of hym hath quaked
He of knyghthod / and of fredom flour
ffortune hym made / the heir of hire honour
Saue wyn and wommen / no thyng myghte aswage
His hye entente / in armes and labour
So was he ful / of leonyn corage

¶ What prys were it to hym / thogh I yow tolde
Of Darius / and an hundred thousand mo
Of kynges / Prynces / Dukes / Erles bolde
Whiche he conquered / and broghte hem in-to wo
I seye / as fer / as man may ride or go
The world was his / what sholde I moore deuyse
ffor thogh I write / or tolde yow euere mo
Of his knyghthode / it myghte nat suffise

[T]welf yeer he regned / as seith Machabee [leaf 96, back]
Philippes sone of Macidoyne / he was
That first was kyng' in Grece the contree
O worthy / gentil Alisandre allas
That euere / sholde fallen swich a cas
Empoysoned / of thyn owene folk' thow weere
Thyn sys / ffortune hath turned in-to Aas
And for thee / ne weep she neuer a teere

¶ Who shal me yeue teeris / to compleyne
The deeth / of gentilesse / and of franchise
That al this world / weldid in his demeyne
And yet hym thoughte / it myghte nat suffise
So ful was his corage / of heigh emprise
Allas / who shal me helpe to endite
ffalse ffortune / and poyson to despise
The whiche two / of al this wo I wyte

[*Julius Cæsar.*]

By wisdom / manhede / and by greet labour / De Iulio Cesare
ffrom humble bed / to Roial magestee
Vp roos / he Iulius the Conquerour
That wan al the Occident' by land and see
By strengthe of hond / or ellis by tretee
And vn-to Rome / made hem tributarie
And sith of Rome / the Emperour was he
Til that ffortune / weex his Aduersarie

¶ O myghty Cesar / that in Thessalie
Agayn Pompeus / fader thyn in lawe
That of thorient hadde al the chiualrie
As fer / as þat the day bigynneth dawe
Thow / thurgh thy knyghthod / hast hem take & slawe
Saue fewe folk þat with Pompeus fledde
Thurgh which / thow puttest al Thorient in Awe
Thanke ffortune / that so wel thee spedde

¶ But now a litel while / I wol biwaille
This Pompeus / this noble gouernour
Of Rome / which þat fleigh at this bataille
I seye / oon of hise men / a fals traitour
His heed of smoot/ to wynnen hym fauour
Of Iulius / and hym the heed he broghte
Allas Pompeie / of Thorient conquerour
That ffortune / vn-to swich a fyn thee broghte

¶ To Rome agayn / repaireth Iulius [leaf 97]
With his triumphe / lauriat ful hye
But on a tyme / Brutus Cassius
That euere hadde / of his heighe estat enuye
fful pryuely / hath maad conspiracie
Agayns this Iulius / in subtil wise
And caste the place / in which he sholde dye
With Boydekyns / as I shal yow deuyse

¶ This Iulius / to the Capitolie wente
Vp-on a day / as he was wont to goon
And in the Capitolie / anon hym hente
This false Brutus / and hise othere foon
And stiked hym / with Boydekyns anon
With many a wounde / and thus they lete hym lye
But neuere gronte he / at no strook but oon
Or ellis at two / but if his storie lye

¶ So manly / was this Iulius of herte
And so wel / louede estatly honestee
And thogh hise deedly woundes / so sore smerte
His mantel ouer his hipes / caste he
ffor no man / sholde seen his pryuetee
And as he lay / of dyyng in a traunce
And wiste verraily thatꝫ deed was he
Of honestee / yet hadde he remembraunce

¶ Lucan. / to thee this storie I recomende
And to Sweton / and to Valerius also
That of this storie / writen word & ende
How thatꝫ to thise grete Conquerours two
ffortune / was first freend / and siththe a foo
No man ne triste / vp-on hire fauour longe
But haue hire / in awaytꝫ for euere mo
Witnesse / on alle thise Conquerours stronge

[*Cresus.*]

This riche Cresus / whilom kyng of Lyde [Cresus].
Of which Cresus / Cirus soore hym dradde
Yet was he caughtꝫ amyddes al his pryde
And to be brent/ men to the fyr hym ladde
But swich a reyn / doun fro the welkne shadde
That slow the fyr / and made hym to escape
But to be war / no grace yet he hadde
Til ffortune / on the galwes made hym gape

[1 Wh]anne he escaped was / he kan nat stente [1 *Rats.* lf 97, bk]
ffor to bigynne / a newe werre agayn
He wende wel / for þat ffortune hym sente
Swich hape / that he escaped thurgh the rayn
That of his foos / he myghte nat be slayn
And eek a sweuene / vp-on a nyght he mette
Of which / he was so proud / and eek so fayn
That in vengeance / he al his herte sette

¶ Vp on a tree he was / as þat hym thoughte
Ther Iuppiter hym wessh / bothe bak and syde
And Phebus eek/ a fair towaille hym broughte
To drye hym with / and ther-fore wax his pryde
And to his doghter / that stood hym bisyde
Which that he knew / in heigh sentence habounde
And bad hire telle hym / what it signyfide
And she his dreem / bigan right thus expounde

¶ The tree quod she / the galwes is to mene
And Iuppiter / bitokneth snow and reyn
And Phebus / with his towaille so clene
Tho been / the sonnes stremes for to seyn
Thow shalt an hanged be / fader certeyn
Reyn shal thee wasshe / and sonne shal thee drye
Thus warned hym / ful plat and ful pleyn
His doghter / which þat called was Phanye

¶ An hanged was Cresus / the proude kyng
His Roial trone / myghte hym nat auaille
Tragedies noon oother manere thyng
Ne kan in syngyng/ crye ne biwaille
But þat ffortune / alwey wole assaille
With vnwar strook/ the regnes þat been proude
ffor whan men trusteth hire / thanne wol she faille
And couere hire brighte face / with a clowde

[*These 4 modern instances ought to follow 'Zenobia,' p.* 268.]

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

O noble / o worthy Petro / glorie of Spayne
Whom ffortune heeld / so heighe in magestee
Wel oghten men / thy pitous deeth complayne
Out of thy land / thy brother made thee flee
And after at a sege / by subtiltee
Thow were bitraysed / and lad vn-to his tente
Where as he / with his owene hand slow thee
Succedynge / in thy regne and in thy rente

De Petro Ispannie

¶ The feeld of snow / with thegle of blak ther-Inne [leaf 98]
Caught with the lymrod / coloured as the glede [*Bertrand du Guesclin.*]
He brew this cursednesse / and al this synne
The wikked nest' was werkere of this nede
Noght Charles Olyuer / þat took ay hede
of trouthe and honour / but of Armorike [*Oliver de Mauny of Britanny.*]
Genylon Olyuer / corrupt for mede
Broghte this worthy kyng' in swich a brike

[*Peter of Cyprus.*]

O worthy Petro / kyng of Cipre also De Petro de Cipro
That Alisaundre wan / by heigh maistrie
fful many an hethen / wroghtestow ful wo
Of which / thyne owene liges hadde envie
And for no thyng' but for thy chiualrie
They in thy bed / han slayn thee by the morwe
Thus kan ffortune / hire wheel gouerne and gye
And out of ioye / brynge men to sorwe

[*Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.*]

Of Melan / grete Barnabo Viscounte / De Barnabo /
God of delit' and scourge of Lumbardye
Why sholde I nogh't thyn Infortune acounte
Sith in estat/ thow clombe were so hye
Thy brother sone / that was thy double allye'
ffor he thy Nevew was / and sone in lawe
With-Inne his prisoñ / made thee to dye
But why ne how / noot .I. that thow were slawe

[*Ugolino, Count of Pisa.*]

Of the Erl Hugelyn of Pize / the langour / De hugelyn
Ther may no tonge / tellen for pitee Comite de Piz
But litel out of Pize / stant a tour
In which[e] tour / in prisoñ put was he
And with hym been / hise litel children thre
The eldeste scarsly / fyue yeer was of age
Allas ffortune / it was greet crueltee
Swiche briddes / for to putte in swich a cage

¶ Dampned was he / to dyen in that prisoñ
ffor Roger / which þat bisshope was of Pize
Hadde on hym maad / a fals suggestioñ
Thurgh which the peple / gan vp on hym rise
And putten hym to prison / in swich wise
As ye han herd / and mete and drynke he hadde
So smal / that wel vnnethe it may suffise
And ther with al / it was ful poure and badde

[1 A]nd on a day bifel / þat in that hour [1 *Rats.* leaf 98, back]
Whan þat his mete / wont was to be broght
The Gayler / shette the dores of the tour
He herde it wel / but he spak / right noght
And in his herte / anon ther fil a thoght
That they for hunger / wolde doon hym dyen
Allas quod he / allas þat I was wroght
Ther with / the teeris fillen from hise eyen

¶ His yonge sone / þat thre yeer was of age
Vn-to hym seyde / fader / fader / why do ye wepe
Whanne wol the Gayler / bryngen oure potage
Is ther no morsel breed / þat ye do kepe
I am so hungry / that I may nat slepe
Now wolde god / þat I myghte slepen euere
Thanne sholde noght hunger / in my wombe crepe
Ther is no thyng but breed / þat me were leuere

¶ Thus day by day / this child bigan to crye
Til in his fadres barm / adoun it lay
And seyde / farewel fader / I moot dye
And kiste his fader / and deyde the same day
And whan the woful fader / deed it say
ffor wo / hise armes two / he gan to byte
And seyde / allas ffortune and weylaway
Thy false wheele / my wo al may I wyte

¶ Hise children wende / that it for hunger was
That he hise armes gnow / and nat for wo
And seyden fader / do nat so allas
But rather / ete the flessh vp-on vs two
Oure flessh thow yaf taak oure flessh vs fro
And ete ynow / right thus they to hym seyde
And after that with-Inne a day / or two
They leyde hem / in his lappe adoun / and deyde

¶ Hym self despeired / eek/ for hunger starf
Thus ended is / this myghty Erl of Pize
ffrom heigh estat. ffortune awey hym carf
Of this tragedie / it oghte ynogh suffise
Who so wole it heere it in a lenger wise
Redeth / the grete Poete of Ytaille
That highte Dant. for he kan al deuyse
ffro point to point nat o word wol he faille

Here is ended the Monkes tale

[leaf 99]
¶ This is the Prologe / of the Nonne Prees [tes[1]] tale.
[1 *Rats.*]

HO quod the knyght good sire namoore of this
That ye han seyd / is right ynow ywis
And muchel moore / for litel heuynesse
Is right ynow / to muche folk I gesse [*no gap in Hengwrt*] 3960
[I seye for me hit is a grete disese [MS Reg. 18 C ii, *leaf* 226]
where as men han ben in grete welþe & ese
To heren of her sodeyn fal allas
And þe contrarie is ioye and grete solace 3964
As whan a man haþ be in pore estate
And clymbeth vp and wexeth fortunate
[And ther/ a-bideth in prosperite.] [Harl. 1758, *lf* 192, *bk*]
Suche þing is gladsom as hit þinketh me 3968
And þough suche þing were goodly forto telle
3e quod oure Oste by seynt poules belle
3e seie right soth þis monk he clappeth loude
He spak how fortune couered in a cloude 3972
I not neuere what & also of a treiadie
Right now 3e herde and parde no remedie
It is for to be-wayle ne complayne
That that is doon and also hit is a payne 3976
As 3e han saide to here of heuynesse
Sire monk nomore of þis so god 3ou blesse
3oure tale annoyeth all þis companye
Suche talkyng nys not worth a butterflye] [MS Reg. *extract ends*]
Youre tales / doon vs no desport ne game
Wher-fore sire Monk/ o. daun Piers by youre name
I prey yow hertely / telle vs som what ellis
ffor sikerly / nere clynkyng of youre bellis 3984

That on youre bridel hange / on euery syde
By heuene kyng þat for vs alle dyde
I sholde er this / haue fallen doun for sleepe
Al thogh the slow / hadde neuere ben so deepe
Thanne hadde youre tale / al be toold in veyn
ffor certeynly / as þat thise clerkes seyn
Where as a man / may haue noon audience
Naught helpeth it to tellen his sentence
And wel I woot the substance is in me
If any thyng shal wel reported be
Sire / sey som what of huntyng I yow preye
¶ Nay quod this Monk / I haue no lust to pleye
Now lat another telle / as I haue toold
¶ Thanne spak oure hoost with rude speche & boold
And seyde / vn-to the Nonnes preest anon
Com neer thow preest com hider thow sir Iohn
Telle vs swich thyng as may oure hertes glade
Be blythe / though thow ryde vp-on a Iade
What though thyn hors / be bothe foul and lene
If he wol serue thee / rekke nat a bene
Looke / that thyn herte / be murye euere mo
¶ Yis sire quod he / yis hoost so mote I go
But I be murye / ywis I wol be blamed
And right anon / his tale he hath attamed
And thus he seyde / vn-to vs euerichon
This sweete preest this goodly man sir Iohn

Explicit

¶ Here bigynneth the Nonnes preestes tale of the Cok/
and Hen / Chaũtecler & Pertelote / [leaf 99, back]

A poore wydwe / som del stape in age
was whilom dwellynge / in a narwe cotage
Biside a grove / stondyng in a dale
This wydwe / of which I telle yow my tale
Syn thilke day / þat she was last a wyf
In pacience / ladde a ful symple lyf
ffor / litel was hire catel and hire rente
By housbondrye / of swich as god hire sente
She foond hir self / and eek hir doghtren two
Thre large sowes / hadde she and namo
Thre kyn / and eek a sheepe / þat highte Malle
ful sooty was hire bour / and eek hire halle
In which she eet ful many a sklendre meel
Of poynaũt sawce / hir neded neuer a deel
No deyntee morsel / passed thurgh hir throte
Hir diete / was acordant to hir cote
Repleccioñ / ne made hire neuere syk
Attempree diete / was al hire phisyk
And excercise / and hertes suffisaunce
The gowte / lette hire no thyng for to daunce
Napoplexie / shente nat hire heed
No wyn ne drank she / neither whit ne reed
Hire bord was serued / moost with whit and blak
Milk and broun breed / in which she foond no lak
Seynd bacoñ / and som tyme an Ey / or tweye
ffor she was / as it were / a maner deye
A yeerd she hadde / enclosed al aboute
With stikkes / and a drye dych with-oute
In which / she hadde a cok/ heet Chaũtecler
In al the land / of crowyng nas his peer

His voys was murier / than the myrie Orgon
On massedayes / þat in the chirche gon
Wel sikerer / was his crowyng in his logge
Than is a Clokke / or any Abbey Orlogge
By nature / he knew ech ascencioñ
Of equinoxial / in thilke town
ffor whan degrees .xv. / were ascended [leaf 100]
Thanne krew he / þat it myghte nat ben amended
His komb / was redder / than the fyn coral
And batayled / as it were a Castel wal
His byle was blak' and as the Ieet' it shoon
Lyk Asure / were hise legges and his toon
Hise nayles whitter / than the lylye flour
And lyk the burned gold / was his colour
This gentil cok/ hadde in his gouernaunce
Seuene hennes / for to doon al his plesaunce
Whiche were hise sustres / and his paramours
And wonder lyke to hym / as of colours
Of whiche / the faireste hewed on hire throte
Was clepid / faire damoysele Pertelote
Curteys she was / discret/ and debonaire
And compaignable / and bar hir self so faire
Syn thilke day / þat she was seuen nyght oold
That trewely / she hath the herte in hoold
Of Chañtecler / loken in euery lyth
He loued hire so / þat wel was hym ther with
But swich a ioye was it' to here hem synge
Whan þat / the brighte sonne gan to sprynge
In swete acord / my leef/ is faren in londe
ffor thilke tyme / as I haue vnderstonde
Beestes / and briddes / kouden speke and synge
And so bifel / þat in a dawenynge
As Chañtecler / among hise wyues alle
Sat on his perche / that was in the halle
And next hym sat' this faire Pertelote
This Chañtecler / gan gronen in his throte

As man / þat in his dreem / is drecched soore
¶ And whan þat Pertelote / thus herde hym rore
She was agast/ and seyde herte deere
What eyleth yow · to grone in this manere
Ye ben a verray slepere / fy for shame
¶ And he answerde / and seyde thus / madame
I prey yow / þat ye take it nat agrief'
By god me mette / I was in swich meschief'
Right now / þat yet myn herte is soore afright'
Now god quod he / my sweuene recche aright'
[1][A]nd kepe my body / out of foul prisoun [1 *Rats.* leaf 100, bk]
Me mette / how that I romed vp and doun
With-Inne oure yeerd / where as I say a beest'
Was lyk an hound / and wolde han maad arest'
Vp-on my body / and han had me ded
His colour / was bitwixe yelow and red
And tipped was his tayl / and bothe hise erys
With blak' vnlik the remenañt of hise herys
His snowte smal / with glowyng eyen tweye
Yet of his look' for fere almoost I deye
This caused me / my gronyng doutelees
¶ Avoy quod she / fy on yow hertelees
Allas quod she / for by that god aboue
Now han ye lost' myn herte and al my loue
I kan nat loue a Coward / by my feith
ffor certes / what so any woman seith
We alle desiren / if it myghte be
To han housbondes / hardy / wise and fre
And secree / and no nygard / ne no fool
Ne hym / þat is agast of euery tool
Ne noon auauntour / by that god aboue
How dorste ye seyn / for shame / vn-to youre loue
That any thyng' myghte make yow aferd
Haue ye no mannes herte / and han a berd
Allas / and konne ye ben agast of sweuenys
No thyng god woot' but vanytee in sweuene is

Sweuenes / engendren of replexions
And ofte / of fume / and of complexions
Whan humours / ben to habundant in a wight
Certes this dreem / which ye han met to nyght 4116
Comth / of the grete superfluitee
Of youre rede Colera pardee
Which causeth folk / to dreden in hir dremes
Of Arwes / and of fyr with rede lemes 4120
Of rede bestes / that they wol hem byte
Of contek and of whelpes grete and lyte
Right as the humour / of Malencolie
Causeth ful many a man / in sleepe to crie 4124
ffor fere of blake beres / or boles blake
Or ellis / blake deueles wol hem take
Of othere humours / koude I telle also [leaf 101]
That werken many a man / in sleep ful wo 4128
But I wol passe / as lightly as I kan
Lo Catoñ which þat was so wys a man
Seyde he nat thus / ne do no fors of dremes
Now sire quod she / whan we fle fro thise bemes 4132
ffor goddes loue / as taak som laxatif
Vp peril of my soule / and of my lif
I conseile yow the beste / I wol nat lye
That bothe of Colere / and of Malencolye 4136
Ye purge yow / and for ye shal nat tarye
Thogh/ in this town / is noon Apothecarye
I shal my self / to herbes techen yow
That shul ben / for youre heele and for youre prow 4140
And in oure yerd / tho herbes shal I fynde
The whiche han / of hire propretee by kynde
To purge yow / bynethe and eek aboue
fforyet nat this / for goddes owene loue 4144
Ye ben ful colerik of complexioñ
Ware the sonne / in his Ascencioñ
Ne fynde yow nat replet of humours hote
And if it do / I dar wel leye a grote 4148

That ye shul haue / a feuere terciane
Or an Agew / þat may be youre bane
A day / or two / ye shul han degestyues
Of wormes / er ye take youre laxatyues
Of Lauriol / Centaure and ffumetere
Or ellis of Ellebor / that groweth there
Of Katapuce / or of Gaytrys beryis
Of herbe yue growyng in oure yerd / they merye is
Pekke hem vp right as ther growe / and ete hem In
Be myrie housbonde / for youre fader kyn
Dredeth no dreem / I kan sey yow namoore
¶ Madame quod he / grant mercy of youre loore
But nathelees / as touchyng' dann Catoun
That hath of wisdom / swich a gret renoun
Thogh þat he bad / no dremes for to drede
By god men may / in olde bokes rede
Of many a man / moore of auctoritee
Than euere Caton was / so mote I thee
[1][T]hat al the reuers seyn / of his sentence [1 *Rats.* leaf 101, bk]
And han wel founden / by experience
That dremes / ben signyficacioñs
As wel / of ioye / as tribulacioñs
That folk enduren / in this lyf *present'*
Ther nedeth / make of this noon argument'
The verray preue / sheweth it in dede
¶ Oon of the gretteste Auctour / þat men rede
Seith thus / þat whilom two felawes wente
On pilgrymage / in a ful good entente
And happed so / they coomen in a town
Where as ther was / swich congregacioun
Of peple / and eek' so streit' of herbergage
That they ne founde / as muche as o cotage
In which they bothe / myghte ylogged be
Wherfore / they mosten of necessitee
As for that nyght' departe compaignye
And ech of hem / gooth to his hostelrye

And took his loggyng' as it wolde falle
That oon of hem / was logged in a stalle
ffer in a yeerd / with oxen of the plow
That oother man / was logged wel ynow
As was his auenture / or his fortune
That vs gouerneth alle / as in commune
And so bifel / þat longe / er it were day
This man mette in his bed / ther as he lay
How þat his felawe / gan vp-on hym calle
And seyde allas / for in an Oxes stalle
This nyght' I shal be mordred ther I lye
Now help me deere brother / or I dye
In alle haste / com to me / he sayde
¶ This man / out of his sleepe / for feere abrayde
But whan þat he was wakned / of his sleep
He turned hym / and took of this no keepe
Hym thoughte / his dreem nas but a vanytee
Thus twies / in his slepyng dremed he
And atte thridde tyme / yet his felawe
Cam as hym thoughte / and seyde I am now slawe
Bihoold my blody woundes / depe and wyde
Arys vp erly / in the morwe-tyde
And atte Westgate of the town quod he [leaf 102]
A Carte ful of donge / ther shaltow se
In which / my body is hyd ful priuely
Do thilke Cart' aresten boldely
My gold caused my mordre / sooth to seyn
And tolde hym euery poynt' how he was sleyn
With a ful pitous face / pale of hewe
And truste wel / his dreem he fond ful trewe
ffor on the morwe / as soone as it was day
To his felawes In / he took the way
And whan þat he cam / to this Oxes stalle
After his felawe / he bigan to calle
¶ The hostiler / answerde hym anon
And seyde / sire / youre felawe is agon

As soone as day / he wente out of the town
¶ This man / gan fallen in suspecioun
Remembrynge / on hise dremes þat he mette
And forth he goth / no lenger wolde he lette
Vn-to the westgate of the town / and fond
A dong Carte / went as it were to donge lond
That was arrayed / in that same wise
As ye han herd / the dede man deuyse
And with an hardy herte / he gan to crye
Vengeaunce / and Iustice / of this felonye
My felawe / mordred is / this same nyght'
And in this Cart heere / he lyth gapyng vp-right'
I crye / on the Mynystres / quod he
That sholde kepe / and rulen this Citee
Harrow / allas / heere lyth my felawe slayn
What sholde I moore / vn-to this tale sayn
The peple vp sterte / and caste the Cart to grounde
And in the myddel of the dong' they founde
The dede man / þat mordred was al newe
¶ O blisful god / þat art so Iust and trewe
Lo / how þat thow biwreyest' mordre alway
Mordre wol out' that se we day by day
Mordre / is so wlatsom / and abhomynable
To god / that is so Iust and resonable
That he ne wod nat suffre it helyd be
Though it abyde / a yeer / or two / or thre
[1][M]ordre wol out' this my conclusioun [1 *Rats.* leaf 102, back]
And right anon / Ministres of that town
Han hent the Cartere / and so soore hym pyned
And eek' the hostiler / so sore engyned
That they biknewe / hire wikkednesse anon
And were anhanged / by the nekke bon
Heere may men sen / þat dremes ben to drede
¶ And certes / in the same book I rede
Right' in the nexte Chapitre / after this
I gabbe nat' so haue I ioye or blys

Two men / þat wolde han passed ouer see
ffor certeyn cause / in-to a fer contree
If þat the wynd / ne hadde ben contrarie
That made hem / in a Citee for to tarie
That stood ful myrie / vp on an hauen syde
But on a day / agayn the euen tyde
The wynd gan chaunge / and blew right as hem leste
Iolif and glad / they wenten vn-to reste
And casten hem / ful erly for to sayle
But herkneth / to that o man / fil a gret meruaille
¶ That oon of hem / in slepyng as he lay
Hym mette a wonder dreem / agayn the day
Hym thoughte / a man stood / by his beddes syde
And hym comanded / þat he sholde abyde
And seyde hym thus / if thow tomorwe wende
Thow shalt be dreynt my tale is at an ende
¶ He wook / and tolde his felawe what he mette
And preyde hym / his viage to lette
As for that day / he preyde hym to byde
¶ His felawe / þat lay / by his beddes syde
Gan for to laughe / and scorned hym ful faste
No dreem quod he / may so myn herte agaste
That I wol lette / for to do my thynges
I sette nat a straw / by thy dremynges
ffor sweuenes ben / but vanytees and Iapes
Men dreme al day / of Owles / or of Apes
And of many a maze / ther with al
Men dreme of thyng þat neuere was ne shal
But sith I see / þat thow wolt here abyde
And thus forslewthen / wilfully thy tyde
God woot it reweth me / and haue good day [leaf 103]
And thus / he took his leue / and wente his way
But er þat he / hadde half his cours yseyled
Noot I nat why / ne what meschaunce it eyled
But casuelly / the shippes botme rente
And shipe and man / vnder the water wente

In sighte of othere shippes / it bisyde
That with hem seyled / at the same tyde
And therfore / faire Pertelote so deere
By swiche ensamples olde / maystow leere
That no man / sholde ben to recchelees
Of dremes / for I sey thee doutelees
That many a dreem / ful soore is for to drede
¶ Lo / in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede
That was Kenulphus sone / the noble Kyng
Of Mertenrike / how Kenelm mette a thyng
Alite / er he was mordred / on a day
His mordre / in his auysion he say
His norice / hym expowned euery del
His sweuene / and bad hym for to kepe hym wel
ffor traysoñ / but he nas but .vij. yeer old
And therfore / litel tale hath he told
Of any dreem / so holy was his herte
By god / I hadde leuere than my sherte
That ye hadde rad his legende / as haue I
Dame Pertelote / I sey yow trewely
Macrobeus / that writ the Auysioñ
In Affrike / of the worthy Cipioñ
Affermeth dremes / and seith þat they ben
Warnynge of thynges / þat men after sen
¶ And forther moore / I pray yow looketh wel
In the olde testament of Danyel
If he heeld dremes / any vanytee
¶ Rede eek of Ioseph / and there shul ye see
Wher dremes be som tyme / I sey nat alle
Warnynge of thynges / þat shul after falle
¶ Looke of Egipte / the Kyng Daun Pharao
His bakere / and his butiller also
Wher they ne felte / noon effect in dremes
Who so wol seke / Actes of sondry Remes
[1][M]ay rede of dremes / many a wonder thyng [1 *Rats.* If 103, b]
¶ Lo Cresus / which þat was of Lyde kyng

Mette he nat þat he sat vp-on a tree
Which signyfide / he sholde an hanged be
¶ Lo here Andromacha / Ectores wyf
That day that Ector / sholde lese his lyf
She dremed / on the same nyght biforn
How þat the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn
If thilke day / he wente in-to bataille
She warned hym / but it myghte nat auaille
He wente for to fighte / nathelees
And he was slayn anon / of Achilles
But thilke tale / is al to long to telle
And eek / it is ney day / I may nat dwelle
Shortly I seye / as for conclusiõn
That I shal han / of this auysiõn
Aduersitee / and I seye forther moor
That I ne telle / of laxatyues no stoor
ffor they ben venymes / I woot it wel
I hem deffie / I loue hem neuer a del
¶ Now lat vs speke of myrthe and stynte al this
Madame Pertelote / so haue I blys
Of o thyng god hath sent me large grace
ffor whan I se / the beautee / of youre face
Ye ben so scarlet reed / aboute youre eyen
It maketh / al my drede for to deyen
ffor also siker / as In principio
Mulier / est hominis confusio
Madame / the sentence / of this latyn is
Womman / is mannes ioye and al his blys
ffor whan I feele a nyght youre softe syde
Al be it þat I may nat on yow ryde
ffor þat oure perche / is maad so narwe allas
I am so ful / of Ioye and of solas
That I deffie / bothe sweuene and dreem
And with that word / he fley doun fro the beem
ffor it was day / and eke hise hennes alle
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle

ffor he hadde founde a corn / lay in the yerd
Real he was / he was namoore aferd
He fethered Pertelote / twenty tyme [leaf 104]
And trad as ofte / er it was pryme 4368
He looketh / as it were a grym leoun
And on hise toos / he rometh vp and doun
Hym deyned nat/ to sette his foot to grounde
And chukketh / whan he hath a corn yfounde 4372
And to hym rennen thanne / hise wyues alle
Thus real / as a Prince is in his halle
Leue I this Chauntecler / in his pasture
And after / wol I telle his auenture 4376
¶ Whan that the Monthe / in which the world bigan
That highte March / whan god first maked man
Was complet' and passed were also
Syn March bigan / 30. dayes and two 4380
Bifel / þat Chauntecler / in al his pryde
Hise seuene wyues / walkyng him bisyde
Caste vp hise eyen / to the brighte sonne
That in the signe of Taurus / hadde yronne 4384
xx. degrees and oon / and som what moore
And knew by kynde / and by noon oother loore
That it was pryme / and krew *with* blisful steuene
The sonne he seyde / is clomben vp on heuene 4388
40. degrees and oon / and moore ywis
Madame Pertelote / my worldes blys
Herkneth thyse blisful bryddes / how they synge
And se the fresshe floures / how they sprynge 4392
fful is myn herte / of reuel and solas
But sodeynly / hym fil a sorweful cas
ffor euere the latter ende of ioye / is wo
God woot' þat worldly ioye / is soone ago 4396
And if a Rethor / koude faire endite
He in a Cronycle / saufly myghte it write
As for a souereyn notabilitee Petrus Comestor
Now euery wys man / lat hym herkne me 4400

This storie / is also trewe I vndertake
As is the book/ of Launcelot de Lake
That wommen holde / in ful gret reuerence
Now wol I / torne agayn to my sentence
¶ A Colfox / ful of sley Iniquitee
That in the groue / hadde woned yeres thre
[1][By] heigh ymaginacioñ / forncast' [1 *Rats.* leaf 101, back]
The same nyght' thurgh-out the hegges brast'
In-to the yerd / ther Chauntecler the faire
Was wont' and eek hise wyues to repaire
And in a bed of wortes / stille he lay
Til it was passed / vndren of the day
Waitynge his tyme / on Chauntecler to falle
As gladly doon / thise homycides alle
That in awayt liggen / to mordre men
O false mordrour / lurkynge in thy den
O newe Scariot' newe Genylon
ffalse dissimilour / o greek Synoñ
That broghtest Troye / al outrely to sorwe
O Chauntecler / acursed be that morwe
That thow in-to the yerd / flaugh fro the bemys
Thow were / ful wel y-warned by thy dremys
That thilke day / was perilous to thee
But' what þat god forwoot' moot nedes be
After the opynyoñ of certeyn clerkis
Witnesse on hym / þat any parfit clerk is
That in scole / is gret altercacioñ
In this matere / and gret disputisoñ
And hath ben / of an hundred thousand men
But I ne kan / nat bulte it to the bren
As kan / the holy doctour Augustyn
Or Boece / or the Bisshope Bradwardyn
Wheither / þat goddes worthy forewityng'
Streyneth me nedely / for to doon a thyng/
Nedely clepe I / symple necessitee
Or ellis / if fre choys / be graunted me

To do that same thyng' or do it noght'
Though god forwoot' it/ er þat I was wroght'
Or if his wityng' streyneth neuer a del
But' by necessitee / condicionel
I wol nat han to do / of swich matere
My tale is of a Cok' as ye may heere
That took his conseil / of his wyf/ with sorwe
To walken in the yerd / vp-on that morwe
That he hadde met the dreem / þat I yow tolde
Wommens conseils / be ful ofte colde
Wommannes conseil / broghte vs first to wo [leaf 105]
And made Adam / fro Paradys to go
Ther as he was / ful myrie and wel at ese
But for I noot' to whom it myghte displese
If I conseil of wommen / wolde blame
Passe ouer / for I seyde it in my game
Rede Auctours / where they trete of swich matere
And what they seyn of wommen heere
Thise ben the Cokkes wordes and nat myne
I kan noon harm / on no womman deuyne
¶ ffaire in the Sond / to bathe hire myrily
Lyth Pertelote / and alle hire sustres by
Agayn the sonne / and Chauntecler so free
Song myrier / than the Mermayde in the see
ffor Phisiologus / seith sikerly
How þat they syngen / wel and myrily
¶ And so bifel / that as he caste his eye
Among the wortes / on a Boterflye
He was war of this fox / þat lay ful lowe
No thyng' ne liste hym thanne for to crowe
But cryde anon / cok' cok' and vp he sterte
As man / þat was affrayd in his herte
ffor naturelly / a beest desireth flee
ffro his contrarie / if he may it see
Though he neuere erst' hadde seye it with his eye
This Chauntecler / whan he gan hym espye

He wolde han fled / but þat the fox anon
Seyde gentil sire / allas wher wol ye gon
Be ye affrayd / of me þat am youre freend
Now certes / I were worse than a feend
If I to yow / wolde harm / or vileynye
I am nat come / youre conseil for tespye
But trewely / the cause of my comynge
Was oonly / for to herkne how þat ye synge
ffor trewely / ye han as myrie a steuene
As any Angel hath / þat is in heuene
Ther with / ye han in Musyk moore feelynge
Than hadde Boece / or any þat kan synge
My lord youre fader / god his soule blesse
And eek youre moder / of hire gentillesse
[1][Ha]n in myn hous yben / to my gret ese [1 *Rats.* leaf 105, back]
And certes sire / ful fayn wolde I yow plese
¶ But for men speke of syngynge / I wol seye
So mote I browke wel / myne eyen tweye
Saue ye / I herde neuere man so synge
As dide youre fader / in the morwenynge
Certes / it was of herte / al that he song
And for to make his voys / the moore strong
He wolde so peyne hym / þat *with* bothe hise eyen
He moste wynke / so loude he wolde cryen
And stonden on his typton / ther with al
And strecche forth his nekke / long and smal
And eek/ he was of swich discrecioñ
That ther nas no man / in no Regioñ
That hym in song / or wisdom myghte passe
I haue wel rad / in daun Burnell*e* the Asse
Among hise vers / how þat ther was a cok
ffor a preestes sone / yaf hym a knok
Vp-on his leg whil he was yong and nyce
He made hym / for to lese his benefice
But certeyn / ther nys no comparisoñ
Bitwix the wisdom / and discrecioñ

Of youre fader / and of his subtiltee
Now syngeth sire / for seynte charitee
Lat se / konne ye youre fader countrefete
¶ This Chauntecler / hise wynges gan to bete
As man þat koude / his trayson nat espie
So was he rauysshed / with his flaterie
¶ Allas ye lordes / many a fals flatour
Is in youre court' and many a losengeour
That plesen yow wel moore / by my feyth
Than he / þat soothfastnesse vn-to yow seith
Redeth Ecclesiaste / of flaterye
Beth war ye lordes / of hir trecherye
¶ This Chauntecler / stood hye vp on his toos
Strecchynge his nekke / and heeld hise eyen cloos
And gan to crowe / lowde for the nones
And daun Russelle the fox / stirte vp atones
And by the gargat' hente Chauntecler
And on his bak / toward the wode hym beer
ffor yet' ne was ther no man / þat hym sewed [leaf 106]
¶ O destynee / þat mayst nat ben eschewed
Allas þat Chauntecler / fly fro the bemes
Allas / his wif/ ne roghte nat of dremes
And on a friday / fil al this meschañce
¶ O Venus / þat art goddesse of plesañce
Syn þat thy seruant' was this Chauntecler
And in thy seruyce / dide al his power
Moore for delit' than world to multiplie
Why woldestow suffre hym / on thy day to dye
¶ O Gaufred / deere maister souerayn
That whan / thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn
With shot' compleynedest' his deth so soore
Why ne hadde I now / thy sentence and thy loore
The friday for to chide / as diden ye
ffor on a ffriday / soothly slayn was he
Thanne wolde I shewe yow / how þat I kowde pleyne
ffor Chaunteclerys drede / and for his peyne

¶ Certes / swich cry / ne lamentacioñ
Was neuere of ladyes maad / whan ylioñ
Was wonne / and Pirrus / with his streite swerd
Whanne he hadde hent kyng Priam by the berd
And slayn hym / as seith vs Eneydos
As maden / alle the hennes in the cloos
Whan they hadde seyn / of Chauntecler the sighte
But souereynly / dame Pertelote shrighte
ffful louder / than dide Hasdrubales wyf
Whan þat hire housbonde / hadde ylost his lyf
And þat the Romayns / hadden brend Cartage
She was / so ful of torment and of rage
That wilfully / vn-to the fyr she sterte
And brende hir selven / with a stedefast herte
¶ O woful hennes / right so cryden ye
As / whan þat Nero / brende the Citee
Of Rome / cryden the senatours wyues
ffor þat hir housbondes / losten alle hire lyues
With-outen gilt this Nero hath hem slayn
Now wol I turne / to my tale agayn
¶ The sely widwe / and eek hire doghtres two
Herden thise hennes crye / and maken wo
[1][And] out at dores / stirten they anon [1 *Rats.* leaf 106, back]
[1][A]nd seyen the fox / toward the groue gon
And bar vp-on his bak/ the cok/ away
And criden / out harrow and weilaway
Ha / ha. the fox / and after hym they ran
And eek with staues / many another man
Ran Colle oure dogge / and Talbot and Gerlande
And Malkyn / with a distaf in hire hande
Ran Cow and calf / and eek the verray hogges
So fered / for berkynge of the dogges
And showtynge of the men / and wommen eek
They ronne so / hem thoughte hire herte breek
They yelleden / as fendes doon in helle
The dokes cryden / as men wolde hem quelle

The gees for feere / flowen ouer the trees
Out of the hyue / cam the swarm of bees
So hydous was the noyse / a benedicite
Certes / he Iakke Straw / and his meynee
Ne made neuere showtes / half so shrille
Whan þat they wolden / any flemyng kille
As thilke day / was maad vp-on the fox
Of bras / they broghten bemys / and of box
Of horn / of boon / in whiche they blewe and powped
And ther with al / they skryked and they howped
It semed / as þat heuene sholde falle
Now goode men / I prey yow herkneth alle
Lo / how ffortune / turneth sodeynly
The hope / and pryde eek of hire enemy
This cok þat lay vp-on the foxes bak
In al his drede / vn-to the fox he spak
And seyde sire / if þat I were as ye
Yit sholde I seyn / as wys god helpe me
Turneth ayein ye proude cherles alle
A verray pestilence / vp-on yow falle
Now I am come / vn-to this wodes syde
Maugree youre heed / the cok shal here abyde
I wol hym ete in feith / and that anon
¶ The fox answerde / in feith it shal be don
And [as] he spak that word / al sodeynly
This cok / brak from his mouth delyuerly
And hye vp on a tree / he fley anon
¶ And whan the fox say / þat he was gon
Allas quod he / o Chauntecler Allas
I haue to yow quod he / ydon trespas
In as muche / as I maked yow aferd
Whan I yow hente / and broghte in-to this yerd
But sire / I dide it in no wikke entente
Com doun / and I shal telle yow what I mente
I shal seye sooth to yow / god help me so
¶ Nay thanne quod he / I shrewe vs bothe two

4584 4588 4592 4596 4600 4604 [leaf 107] 4608 4612 4616

And first I shrewe my self / bothe blood and bones
If thow bigile me / any ofter than ones
Thow shalt namoore / thurgh thy flaterye
Do me to synge / and wynken *with* myn eye
ffor he þat wynketh / whan he sholde see
Al wilfully / god lat hym neuere thee
¶ Nay quod the fox / but god yeue hym meschañce
That is / so vndiscret / of gouernañce
That Iangleth / whan he sholde holde his pees
¶ Lo swich it is / for to be recchelees
And necligent and truste on flaterye
But ye / þat holden this tale a folye
As of a fox / or of a cok and hen
Taketh the moralitee / goode men
ffor Seint Poul seith / þat al that writen is
To oure doctryne / it is ywrite ywis
Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille
Now goode god / if þat it be thy wille
As seith my lord / so make vs alle goode men
And brynge vs / to his heye blisse Amen

Dominus Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis

¶ Here is ended / the Nonnes Preestes tale ☙

[*The Manciple's Prologue follows in the MS.*]

DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS

OF THE

24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMERE MS

AND CUT ON WOOD,

BY

Mr W. H. Hooper.

In this first issue, 1871, *only* 14 *of the Cuts are given. The other* 10 *will follow in* 1872. *When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS, or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.*

THE MILLERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 88, *back.*

THE KNYGHT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 14.

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for *Miles*—is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)

THE COOK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.

THE REVE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 46.

THE WYF OF BATHE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.

THE MAN OF LÅWE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.

THE FRERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 80, *back.*

THE SOMONOUR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.

THE CLERK OF OXENFORD.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.

THE SHIPMAN.

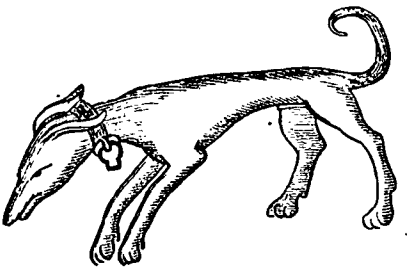
Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.

THE PRIORESSE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 152, *back.*

CHAUCER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, *back.*



THE MONK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 173.

THE NONNES PREEST.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 183.

THE MERCHANT.

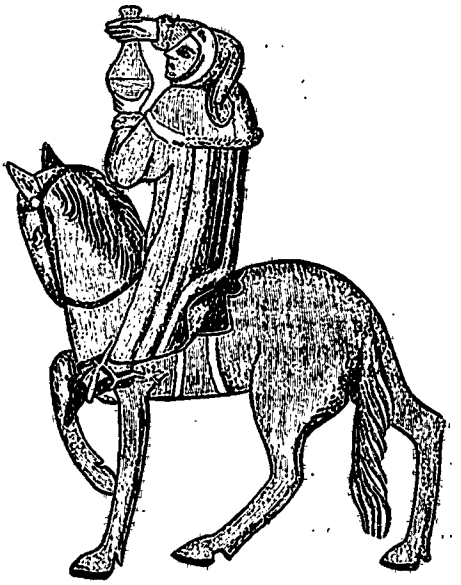
Ellesmere MS, leaf 106, *back.*

THE SQUIRE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 119, *back.*

THE FRANKLIN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 127, *back.*



THE DOCTOR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 137.

THE PARDONER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 142.

THE SECOND NUN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 191.

THE CANON'S YEOMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 198.

THE MANCIPLE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 207.

THE PARSON.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 210, *back.*

[These coloured figures in the Ellesmere MS have evidently been drawn by two different persons. The little pieces of ground on which the later hand places his figures, mark those done by him.

His drawing is not so good as the first hand's; and his colours are badly ground, and of poor quality.—W. H. HOOPER.]

[redacted] Proper Names and Subjects to the Canterbury Tales.

GROUP H. FRAGMENT IX.

§ 1. THE MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

[*on leaf* 107]

¶ And here folweth the Prologe of the Manciples tale /

Woot ye nat where / ther stant a litel town
Which þat cleped is / Bobbe vp and down
Vnder the Blee / in Caunterbury weye
Ther gan oure hoost for to iape and pleye
And seyde sires / what / Don is in the Myre
Is ther no man / for preyere ne for Hyre
[1 Th]at wole awake / oure felawe al bihynde [1 *Rats.* If 108, bk]
A theef myghte hym / ful lightly robbe and bynde
Se how he nappeth / se how for Cokkes bones
That he wol falle / from his hors atones
Is that a Cook of londoñ / with meschañce
Do hym come forth / he knoweth his penañce
ffor he shal telle a tale / by my fey
Al thogh / it be nat worth a botel hey
Awake thow Cook quod he / god ycue thee sorwe
What eyleth thee / to slepe by the morwe
Hastow had fleen al nyght or artow dronke
Or hastow *with* som quene / al nyght yswonke
So / that thow mayst nat holden vp thyn heed
¶ This Cook / þat was ful pale / and no thyng rede
Seyde to oure hoost / so god my soule blesse
As ther is / falle / on me swich heuynesse
Noot I nat why / þat me were leuere slepe
Than the beste galoñ wyn in Chepe

¶ Wel quod the Manciple / if it may don ese
To thee *sir* Cook/ and to no wight displese
Which þat here rideth / in this compaignye
And þat oure hoost/ wole of his curteisye
I wole as now / excuse thee of thy tale
ffor in good feith / thy visage is ful pale
Thyne eyen daswen eek/ as þat me thynketh
And wel I woot thy breth ful soure stynketh
That sheweth wel / thow art nat wel disposed
Of me certeyn / thow shalt nat ben yglosed
Se how he ganeth / lo this dronken wight
As though he wolde / swolwe vs anon right
Hoold cloos thy mouth / man by thy fader kyn
The deuel of helle / sette his foot ther yn
Thy cursed breeth / infecte wol vs alle
ffy stynkynge swyn / fy / foule mote thee falle
A taketh hede sires / of this lusty man
Now swete sire / wol ye Iusten atte ffan
Ther-to me thynketh / ye ben wel y-shape
I trowe / þat ye dronken han wyn Ape
And that is / whan men pleyen *with* a straw
And with his speche / the Cook wax wroth & wraw
And on the Manciple / bigan he nodde faste [leaf 108]
ffor lakke of speche / and doun the hors hym caste
Wher as he lay / til þat men vp hym took
This was / a fair chyuachee of a Cook
Allas / he nadde yholde hym / by his ladel
And er þat he / agayn were in his sadel
Ther was gret showuyng bothe to and fro
To lifte hym vp / and muchel care and wo
So vnweldy / was this sory palled goost
And to the Manciple / thanne spak oure hoost
¶ By cause // drynke hath domynacioñ
Vp on this man / by my sauacioñ
I trowe he lewedly / telle wolde his tale
ffor were it wyn / or old / or moisty Ale-

That he hath dronke / he speketh in his nose
And fneseth faste / and eek' he hath the pose
He hath also to do / moore than ynow
To kepen hym / and his capil / out of the Slow
And if he falle / from his capil eft soone
Than shal we alle / haue ynow to doone
In liftynge vp / his heuy dronken cors
Telle on thy tale / of hym make I no fors
But yet Manciple / in feith thow art to nyce
Thus openly / repreue hym of his vice
Another day / he wole p*ar* Auenture
Reclayme thee / and brynge thee to lure
I mene / he speke wole / of smale thynges
As for to pynchen / at thy rekenynges
That were nat honeste / if it cam to preef
¶ No quod the Manciple / that were a gret meschcef
So myghte he lightly / brynge me in the snare
Yet hadde I leuere / payen for the Mare
Which he rit on / than he sholde w*ith* me stryue
I wol nat wrathe hym / also mote I thryue
That' þ*at* I spak' I seyde it in my bourde
And wite what' I haue here in a gourde
A draughte of wyn / ye of a rype grape
And right anon / ye shul seen a good Iape
This Cook/ shal drynke ther of' if I may
Vp peyne of deeth / he wol nat seye me nay
[1 An]d c*er*teynly / to tellen as it was [1 *Rats.* leaf 108, back]
Of this vessel / the Cook drank faste / allas
What neded it' he drank ynow biforn
And whan he hadde / powped in this horn
To the Manciple / he took the gourde agayn
And of that drynke / the Cook was wonder fayn
And thanked hym / in swich wise as he kowde
¶ Thanne gan oure hoost' to laughen wonder lowde
And seyde / I se wel it is necessarie
Where þ*at* we goon / good drynke we w*ith* vs carye

ffor that wol turne / rancour and disese
Tacord and loue / a[nd] many a wrong Appese
¶ O Bacus / yblessed be thy name
That so kanst turnen / ernest in to game
Worshipe and thank be to thy deitee
Of that matere / ye gete namoore for me
Telle on thy [tale] Manciple / I the preye
Wel sir quod he / now herkneth what I seye

[*Note to l.* 147, *p.* 581.]

p. 581, l. 147. ¶ Ver*um* quid p*ro*dest/ diligens custodia cu*m* vxor impudica se*r*uari non possit pudica non debeat/ feda eni*m* custod[ia] est castitatis necessitas / pulcra certe adamat*ur* / feda facile concupiscit. Difficile custodit*ur* q*uam* plures amant. [MS. leaf 109.]

[on leaf 108, back]
¶ Here bigynneth the Manciples tale / of the Crowe /

Whan Phebus / dwelled here / in this erthe adoun
As olde bokes / maken mencioun
He was / the mooste lusty bachiler
In al this world / and eek the beste Archer
He slow Phitoñ the serpent' as he lay
Slepynge agayn the sonne vp on a day
And many another / noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wroghte / as men may rede
Pleyen he koude / on euery Mynstralcye
And syngen / þat it was a melodye
To heren / of his clere voys / the soun
Certes / the kyng of Thebes Amphioun
That with his syngyng' walled that Citee
Koudè neuere syngen / half so wel as he
Ther-to / he was the semelieste man
That is / or was / sith þat the world bigan
What nedeth it' hise fetures to discryue
ffor in this world / was noon so fair on lyue
He was ther with / fulfild of gentillesse
Of honour / and of parfit worthynesse
¶ This Phebus / þat was flour of Bachelrye [leaf 109]
As wel / in fredom as in Chiualrye
ffor his desport' in signe eek of Victorie
Of Phitoñ / so as telleth vs the storie
Was wont to beren / in his hand a bowe
Now hadde this Phebus / in his hous a Crowe
Which in a Cage / he fostred many a day
And taughte it speke / as men teche a Iay

Whit was this Crowe / as is a Snow whit Swan
And contrefete / the speche of euery man
He kowde / whan he sholde telle a tale
Ther-with in al this world / no nyghtyngale
Ne koude / by an hondred thousand deel
Syngen / so wonder myrily and weel
¶ Now hadde this Phebus / in his hous a wyf/
Which þat he louede / moore than his lyf
And nyght/ and day / dide euere his diligence
Hire for to plese / and doon hire reuerence
Saue oonly / that the sothe / if I shal sayn
Ialous he was / and wolde han kept hire fayn
ffor hym were looth / byiaped for to be
And so is euery wight' in swich degree
But al for naught/ for it auaileth nought' [*Latin note*, p. 579]
A good wyf/ that is clene in werk and thought'
Sholde nat be kept' in noon awayt certayn
And trewely / the labour is in vayn
To kepe a shrewe / for it wol nat be
This holde I / for a verray nycetee
To spille labour / for to kepe wyues
Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lyues
¶ But now to purpos / as I first bigan
This worthy Phebus / dooth al that he kan
To plesen hire / wenynge for swich plesañce
And for his manhode / and his gouernañce
That no man / sholde han put hym from hire *grace*
But god it woot' ther may no man embrace
As to destreyne a thyng' which þat nature
Hath naturelly / set in a creature
¶ Take any bryd / and put it in a Cage
And do al thyn entente / and thy corage
[1To] fostre it tendrely / with mete and drynke [1 *Rats.* leaf 109, back]
Of alle deyntees / þat thow kanst bithynke
And kepe it' al so clenly as thow may
Al though his Cage / of gold / be neuer so gay

Yet hath this bryd / by .xx. thousand fold
Leuere in a fforest' þat is rude and cold
Gon ete wormes / and swich wrecchednesse
ffor euere this bryd / wol doon his bisynesse
To eschape out of his Cage / if he may
His libertee / this bryd desireth ay
¶ Lat take a Cat' and fostre hym wel with Milk'
And tendre flessh / and make his couche of silk'
And lat hym seen a Mous / go by the wal
Anon he weyueth / Milk / and flessh and al
And euery deyntee / þat is in that hous
Swich appetit hath he / to ete a Mous
Lo / heere hath lust his domynacioñ
And appetit' flemeth discrecioñ
¶ A she wolf hath also / a vileyns kynde
The lewedeste wolf/ þat she may fynde
And leest of reputacioñ / that wol she take
In tyme / whan hire lust' to han a make
¶ Alle thise ensamples / speke I by thise men
That ben vntrewe / but no thyng by wommen
ffor men han euere / a likerous appetit
On lower thyng' / to parformen hir delit
Than on hire wyues / be they neuer so faire
Ne neuer so trewe / ne so debonaire
fflessh̃ is so newfangel / with meschañce
That we ne konne / in no thyng han plesañce
That sowneth in to vertu / any while
¶ This Phebus / which þat thoughte vp ôn no gile
Deceyued was / for al his iolitee
ffor vnder hym / another hadde she
A man / of litel reputacioñ
Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoñ
The moore harm is / it happeth ofte so
Of which ther cometh / muchel harm and wo
And so bifel / whan Phebus was absent'
His wyf anon / hath for hire lemman sent'

Hir lemman / certes this a knauyssh speche [leaf 110]
ſforyeueth it me / and that I yow biseche
The wise Plato seith / as ye may rede
The word moot nede / acorde *with* the dede
If men shal telle / *pro*prely a thyng
The word / moot cosyn be to the werkyng
I am a boystous man / right thus seye I
Ther nys no difference / trewely
Bitwix a wyf/ *þat* is of heigh degree
If of hire body / deshoneste she be
And a poore wenche / oother than this
If it so be / they werke bothe amys
But *þat* the gentile / in estat aboue
She shal be clepid his lady / as in loue
And for that oother / is a poore womman
She shal be clepid / his wenche / or his lemman
And god it woot/ myn owene deere brother
Men leyn *þat* oon / as lowe as lyth that oother
¶ Right so / bitwix a sine titulo titlelees tirañt
And an Outlawe / or a theef errañt
The same I seye / ther is no difference
To Alisandre / was told this sentence
That for the tirañt / is of gretter myght
By force of meyne / for to sleen doun right
And brennen hous and hoom / and make al playn
Lo / ther fore / is he clepid a Capitayn
And for the Outlawe / hath but smal meynee
And may nat doon / so gret an harm as he
Ne brynge a contree / to so gret meschief
Men clepen hym / an Outlawe or a theef/
But for I am a man / noght textuel
I wol noght telle of textes / neuer a del
I wol go to my tale / as I bigan
¶ Whan Phebus wyf/ hadde sent for hire lemman
Anon they wroghte / al hire lust volage
The white Crowe / *þat* heng ay in the Cage

Biheld hir werk/ and seyde neuer a word
And whan that hoom was come / Phebus the lord
This Crowe sang' Cokkow / Cokkow Cokkow
¶ What bryd quod Phebus / what song' syngestow
[1 N]e were thow wont' so myrily to synge [1 *Rats.* leaf 110, back]
That to myn herte / it was a reioysynge
To here thy voys / allas what song is this
¶ By god quod he / I synge nat amys
Phebus quod he / for al thy worthynesse
ffor al thy beautee / and thy gentillesse
ffor al thy song' and al thy Mynstralcye
ffor al thy waityng' blered is thyn eye
With oon / of litel reputacioñ
Nat worth to thee / in comparisoñ
The montañce of a gnat' so mote I thryue
ffor in thy bed / thy wif I sey hym *&cetera*
What wol ye moore / the Crowe anon hym tolde
By sadde toknes / and by wordes bolde
How *þat* his wyf/ hadde doon hire lecherye
Hym to gret shame / and to gret vileynye
And tolde hym / ofte he say it *with* hise eyen
¶ This Phebus / gan aweyward for to wryen
And thoughte / his sorweful herte brast atwo
His bowe he bente / and sette ther-Inne a flo
And in his Ire / his wyf' thanne hath he slayn
This is theffect/ ther nys namoore to sayn
ffor sorwe of which / he brak his Mynstralcye
Bothe harpe / and Lute / and Gyterne / and Sawtrye
And eek he brak/ his arwes / and his bowe
And after that/ thus spak he to the Crowe
¶ Traytour quod he / *with* tonge of Scorpioñ
Thow hast me broght' to my confusioñ
Allas *þat* I was wroght' why nere I ded
O deere wyf/ O gemme of lustihed
That were to me / so sad / and eek so trewe
Now lystow ded / *with* face pale of hewe

ffful giltlees / that dorste I swere ywys
O rakel hand / to doon so foule amys
O trouble wit/ o Ire recchelees
That vnauysed / smytest giltlees
O wantrust' ful of fals suspecioñ
Where was thy wit' and thy discrecioñ
O eu*e*ry man / be war of rakelnesse
Ne trowe ye no thyng' w*ith* outen strong witnesse
Smyt nat to soone / er *þat* ye witen why [leaf 111]
And beth auysed / wel and sobrely
Er ye do / any execucioñ
Vp on youre Ire / for suspecioñ
¶ Allas / a thousand folk/ hath rakel Ire
ffully fordoon / or broght hem in the Myre
Allas / for sorwe / I wol my seluen sle
¶ And to the Crowe / o false theef seyde he
I wol thee quyte anon / thy false tale
Thow songe whilom / lyk a nyghtyngale
Now shaltow false theef/ thy song forgon
And eek' thy white fetheres euerichon
Ne neuere in al thy lyf/ ne shaltow speke
Thus shal men / on a traytour ben awreke
Thow and thyn offspryng' euere shul be blake
Ne neuere / swete noyse shul ye make
But euere crye / agayn tempest' and rayn
In tokenynge / *þat* thurgh thee my wyf is slayn
And to the Crowe he stirte / and that anon
And pulled / hise white fetheres euerichon
And made hym blak' and refte hym al his song'
And eek his speche / and out at dore hym slong'
Vn to the deuel / which I hym bitake
And for this cas / ben alle Crowes blake
¶ Lordynges / by this ensample / I yow preye
Beth war / and taketh kepe what I seye
Ne telleth neu*e*re / no man in youre lyf
How *þat* another man / hath dight his wyf

He wol yow haten / mortally certeyn
¶ Daun Salomon / as wise clerkes seyn
Techeth a man / to kepen his tonge wel
But as I seyde / I nam nat textuel
But nathelecs / thus taughte me my Dame
My sone / thenk on the Crowe a goddes name
My sone / keep wel thy tonge / and kepe thy freend
A wikke tonge / is worse than a feend
My sone / from a feend / men may hem blesse
My sone / god / of his endelees goodnesse
Walled a tonge / with teeth / and lippes eke
ffor man sholde hym auyse / what he speeke
[¹My s]one / ful ofte / for to muche speche [¹ *Rats.* If 111, bk]
[¹H]ath many a man ben spilt' as clerkes teche
But for litel speche / auysely
Is no man shent' to speke gen*e*rally
My sone / thy tonge / sholdestow restreyne
At alle tymes / but whan thow doost thy peyne
To speke of god / in honour and prayere
The firste v*er*tu sone / if thow wolt leere
Is to restreyne / and kepe wel thy tonge
Thus lernen children / whan þ*at* they ben yonge
My sone / of muchel spekyng' yuele auysed
Ther lasse spekyng' hadde ynow suffised
Comth muchel harm / thus was me told & taught'
In muchel speche / synne wanteth naught'
Wostow wher of/ a rakel tonge serueth
Right as a swerd / forkitteth and forkerueth
An arm atwo / my deere sone right so
A tonge / kitteth frendship al atwo
A Ianglere / is to god abhomynable
Rede Salomon / so wys and honurable
Rede Dauid in his psalmes / rede Senekke
My sone / spek nought' but w*ith* thyn hed thow bekke
Dissimule as thow were deef/ if þ*at* thow heere
A Ianglere speke / of p*er*ilous matere

¶ The flemyng seith / and lerne it' if thee leste
That litel Ianglyng' causeth muchel reste
My sone / if thow / no wikked word hast seyd
Thee thar nat drede / for to be biwreyd
But he þat hath mysseyd / I dar wel sayn
He may by no wey / clepe his word agayn
Thyng that is sayd / is seyd / and forth it gooth
Though hym repente / or be hym leef' or looth
He is his thral / to whom þat he hath sayd
A tale / of which he is now yuele apayd
My sone be war / and be noon Auctour newe
Of tidynges / wher they ben false / or trewe
Wher so thow come / amonges heye / or lowe
Kepe wel thy tonge / and thynk vp on the Crowe

¶ Here is ended /the Manciples tale / of the Crowe

GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

§ 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

The prohemie of the Mannes tale of Lawe.

Oure hoost saw wel / that the brighte sonne [leaf 112]
The ark' of his artificial day hath ronne
The ferthe part' and half an hour and moore
And thogh he were nat' depe ystert in loore
He wiste / it was the xviij^{the} day
Of April / that is messager to May
And saw wel / þat the shadwe of euery tree
Was as in lengthe / the same quantitee
That was the body erect' that caused it
And therfore by the shadwe / he took his wit'
That Phebus / which þat shoon so cleer and brighte
Degrees was .xlv. clombe on highte
And for that day / as in that latitude
It was ten at the Clokke / he gan conclude
And sodeynly / he plighte his hors aboute
¶ Lordynges quod he / I warne yow al this route
The ferthe party / of this day is goon
Now for the loue of god / and of Seint Iohn
Leseth no tyme / as ferforth as ye may
Lordynges the tyme / it wasteth nyght' and day
And steleth from vs / what pryuely slepynge
And what thurgh necligence / in oure wakynge
As dooth the streem / þat turneth neuere agayn
Descendynge / fro the montaigne in to playn
Wel kan Senec' and many a Philosophre
Biwaillen tyme / moore than gold in cofre
ffor los of catel / may recouered be
But los of tyme / shendeth vs quod he

It wol nat come agayn / with outen drede
Namoore / than wol Malkyns maydenhede
Whan she hath lost it / in hir wantownesse
Lat vs nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse
¶ Sire man of lawe quod he / so haue ye blys
Tel vs a tale anon / as forward is
Ye been submitted thurgh youre free assent
To stonden in this cas / at my Iuggement
[A]quiteth yow now / of youre biheste [leaf 112, back]
Thanne haue ye doon youre deuoir atte leeste
¶ Hoost quod he dep*ar*dieux ich assente
To breken forward / is nat myn entente
Biheste is dette / and I wol holde fayn
Al my biheste / I kan no bettre sayn
ffor swich lawe / as a man yeueth another wight/
He sholde hym self / vsen it by right
Thus wol oure text / but nathelees c*er*tein
I kan right now / no thrifty tale seyn
That Chaucer / thogh he kan but lewedly
On metres / and on rymyng craftily
Hath seyd hem / in swich englissh as he kan
Of olde tyme / as knoweth many a man
And if he ne haue nat seyd hem / leeue brother
In o book he hath seyd hem in another
ffor he hath toold / of louers vp and doun
Mo than Ouide / made of mencioun
In his epistles / þat been ful olde
What sholde I tellen hem / syn they been tolde
In yowthe he made / of Ceys and Alcione
And sithen / hath he spoke of eu*er*ychone
Thise noble wyues / and thise loueres eke
Who so þat wole / his large volum seke
Clepyd / the Seintes legende of Cupide
Ther maystow seen /. the large woundes wyde
Of Lucresse / and of Babilan Tisbee
The swerd of Dido / for the false Enee

The tree of Phillis / for hir Demophon
The pleinte of Dianire / and of hermyoñ
Of Adriane / and of ysiphilee
The barayne Ile / stondynge in the See
The dreynte leandre / for his Erro
The terys of Eleyne / and eke the wo
Of Brixseyde / and of the Ladomea
The crueltee / of the queene Medea
The litel children / hangyng by the hals
ffor thy Iasoñ / that was of loue so fals
O Ypermystra / Penolopee / Alceste
Youre wifhod / he comendeth with the beste
But certeinly / no word ne writeth he [leaf 113]
Of thilke wikke ensample / of Canacee
That' loued / hir owene brother synfully
Of swiche cursed stories / I sey fy
Or ellis / of Tyro Appollonius
How þat / the cursed kyng Antiochus
Birafte his doghter / of hir maydenhede
That is / so horrible a tale for to rede
When he hir threw / vp on the pauement
And ther fore / he of ful auisement'
Nolde neuere write / in noon of his sermons
Of swiche / vnkynde abhominacions
Ne I wol noon reherce / if þat I may
But of my tale / how shal I doon this day
Me were looth / be likned doutelees
To Muses / þat been clepyd Pierides
Methamorphosios / woot what I mene
But nathelees / I recche noght a bene
Thogh I come after hym / with hawe bake
I speke in prose / and lat' hym rymes make
And with that word / he with a sobre cheere
Bigan his tale / as ye shal after heere

[*No break in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth the tale.

[*THE PROLOGUE.*]

O hateful harm / condicion of pou*er*te
With thurst' with cold / *with* hunger so confoundid
To axen help / thee shameth in thyn herte
If thou noon axe / with nede artow so woundid
That verray nede / vnwrappeth al thy wounde hid
Maugree thyn heed / thou most for Indigence
Or stele / or begge / or borwe thy despence

Thow blamest Crist' and seist ful bitterly
He mysdeparteth / richesse temporal
Thy neghebore / thow witest synfully
And seist' thow hast to lite / and he hath al
P*ar*fay seistow / som tyme he rekne shal
Whan þat his tayl / shal brennen in the gleede
ffor he noght helpeth / nedefulle in hir nede

[' He]rke / what is the sentence of the wise [' *Rats.* leaf 113, bk]
Bet is to dyen / than haue Indigence
Thy selue neghebor / wol thee despise
If thow be pou*er*e / fare wel thy reu*er*ence
Yet of the wise man / tak' this sentence
Alle the dayes / of pou*er*e men been wikke
Be war ther fore / er thow come to that prikke

¶ If thou be pou*er*e / thy brother hateth thee
And alle thy freendes / fleen from thee allas
O riche Marchauntz / ful of wele been ye
O noble / O prudent folk' / as in this cas
Youre bagges / been noght filled *with* ambes as
But with sys cynk'. that renneth for youre chaunce
At Cristemasse / murye may ye daunce

Ye seken lond and see / for youre wynnynges
As wise folk' ye knowen al thestat'
Of regnes / ye been fadres of tidynges
And tales / bothe of pees and of debat'
I were right now / of tales desolat'
Nere þat a Marchaunt / goon is many a yere
Me taughte a tale / which þat ye shal heere

As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.

l. 161. ¶ Europa est tercia pars mundi. [MS, leaf 114.]

l. 197. Ceptra phoronei / fratrum discordia Thebe
flammam Phetontis Decalionis aque
In stellis Priami species audacia Turni
Sensus vlixeus / herculeusque vigor. [MS, lf 114, bk.]

l. 295. ¶ Vnde Ptholomeus libro .i. capitulum g[. . primi] motus celi duo sunt / quorum vnus est qui [movet totum] celum / semper ab Oriente in Occidentem vno [modo] super orbes &c / Ita aliter vero motus est qui mo[vet] orbem stellarum currencium / contra motum primum videlicet ab Occidente in Orientem super alios duos polos &c. [MS, leaf 116.] [*The MS is partly gnawn away by rats.*]

l. 309. ¶ Omnes concordati sunt/ quod elecciones sint/ debiles nisi in diuitibus / habent enim isti licet debilitentur eorum elecciones radicem .i. natiuitates eorum que confortat omnem / planetam / debilem in itinere &c. [MS, leaf 116.]

l. 421. ¶ nota de inopinato dolore ¶ Semper mundane leticie / tristicia repentina succedit / Mundana igitur felicitas multis amaritudinibus est respersa extrema gaudij luctus occupat / Audi ergo salubre consilium in die bonorum ne inmemor sis malorum. [MS, leaf 117, back.]

l. 771. ¶ Quid turpius ebrioso / cui fetor in ore / tremor in corpore / qui promit stulta / prodit occulta / cui mens alienatur / facies transformatur / nullum enim latet secretum vbi regnat ebrietas. [MS, leaf 122, back.]

l. 925. ¶ O. extrema libidinis turp[itudo] que non solum mentem effemi[nat] set eciam corpus eneruat/ se[mper] sequntur dolor & penitencia post &[c]. [MS, leaf 125.]

l. 1132. ¶ A mane vsque [ad vesperam mu]tabitur tempus / t[enent tympa]num & gaudent ad s[onum organi]. [MS, leaf 128.] [*MS is gnawn away by rats.*]

l. 1136. ¶ Quis vnquam vnicam diem totam [duxit] in sua dileccione iocundam / quem [in ali]qua parte diei reatus consciencie / v[el] impetus ire / vel motus concupiscen[tie] non turbauerit/ quem liuor Inuidie vel ardor auaricie / vel tumor superbie non vexauerit / quem aliqua iactura vel offensa / vel passio non commouerit &c. [MS, leaf 128.] [*The MS is partly gnawn away.*]

[*THE TALE.*]

¶ In Surrye whilom / dwelte a compaignye
Of chapmen riche / and ther-to sadde and trewe
That wyde where / senten hir spicerye
Clothes of gold / and Satyns riche of hewe
Hir cheffare / was so thrifty and so newe
That euery wight hath deyntee to cheffare
With hem / and eek to sellen hem hir ware

¶ Now fil it / that the maistres of that sort
Han shapen hem / to Rome for to wende
Were it for chaphod / or for desport
Noon oother message / wolde they thider sende
But coomen hem self to Rome / this is the ende
And in swich place / as thoughte hem auauntage
ffor hir entente / they take hir herbergage

¶ Soiourned han thise Marchauntz / in that town [leaf 114]
A certein tyme / as fil to hir plesaunce
But so bifel / þat the excellent renoun
Of the Emperours doghter / dame Custaunce
Reported was / with euery circumstaunce
Vn to thise Surryen Marchauntz / in swich wise
ffro day / to day / as I shal yow deuyse

¶ This was the commune voys / of euery man
Oure Emperour of Rome / god hym se
A doghter hath / þat syn the world bigan
To rekne as wel / hir goodnesse as beautee
Nas neuere swich another / as is she
I pray to god / in honour hir sustene
And wolde she were / of al Europe the queene [*Latin note*, p. 133.]

¶ In hire is heigh beautee / with oute pryde
Youthe / with outen grenehede / or folye
To alle hir werkes / *ver*tu is hir gyde
Humblesse / hath slayn in hire al tirannye
She is Mirour / of al curteisye
Hir herte / is verray chambre of holynesse
Hir hand Ministre / of fredam / for almesse

¶ And al this voys was sooth / as god is trewe
But now to purpos / lat vs come agayn
Thise Marchauntz / han doon fraught hir shippes newe
And whan they han / this blisful mayden sayn
Hom to Surrye / been they went ful fayn
And doon hir nedes / as they han doon yoore
And lyuen in wele / I kan sey yow namoore

¶ Now fil it' that thise Marchauntz stode in *grace*
Of hym / that was the Sowdan of Surrye
ffor whan they coome / from any straunge place
He wolde / of his benygne curteisye
Maken hem good cheere / and bisily espye
Tidynges / of sondry regnes for to leere
The wondres / that they myghte seen or heere

¶ [Am]onges othere thynges specially [leaf 114, back]
Thise Marchauntz han hym told / of dame Custaunce
.i. ceriose
So greet noblesse / in ernest ceriously
That this Sowdan / hath caught so greet plesaunce
To han hir figure / in his remembraunce
That al his lust / and al his bisy cure
Was for to loue hire / whil his lyf may dure

¶ P*a*rauenture / in thilke large book'
Which þ*a*t men clepe the heuene / ywriten was
With sterres / whan þ*a*t he his birthe took/
That he for loue / sholde han his deth allas

ffor in the sterres / clerer than is glas
Is writen god woot' who so koude it' rede
The deeth of euery man / with outen drede

¶ In sterres / many a wynter / ther biforn [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
Was writen the deeth / of Ector / Achilles
Of Pompei / Iulius / er they were born
The stryf of Thebes / and of Hercules
Of Sampson / Turnus / and of Socrates
The deeth / but mennes wittes been so dulle
That no wight' kan wel rede it atte fulle

¶ This Sowdan / for his priuee conseil sente
And shortly / of this matere for to pace
He hath to hem / declared his entente
And seyde hem certein / but he myghte haue grace
To han Custaunce / with Inne a litel space
He nas but deed / and charged hem in hye
To shapen / for his lyf som remedye

¶ Diuerse men / diuerse thynges seyden
They argumenten / casten vp and doun
Many a subtil reson / forth they leyden
They speken of Magyk/ and Abusioun
But finally / as in conclusioun
They kan nat seen / in that noon Auauntage
Ne in noon oother wey / saue mariage

¶ Thanne sawe they ther Inne / swich difficultee [leaf 115]
By wey of reson / for to speke al playn
By cause / þat ther was swich diuersitee
Bitwene hir bothe lawes / þat they sayn
They trowe / þat no cristen Prince wolde fayn
Wedden his child / vnder oure lawes swete
That vs was taught' by Mahoun oure prophete

¶ And he answerde / rather than I lese
Custaunce / I wol be cristned doutelees
I moot ben hires / I may noon oother chese
I pray yow / hold youre argumentz in pees
Saueth my lyf / and beth noght recchelees
To geten hire / þat hath my lyf in cure
ffor in this wo / I may nat longe endure

¶ What nedeth / gretter dilatacioũ
I seye / by tretys / and embassadrye
And by the Popes[1] mediacioũ [[1] *Inkt out in the MS, and* byshop *written over it.*]
And al the chirche / and al the chiualrie
That in destruccion of Mawmetrie
And in encrees / of Cristes lawe deere
They been acorded / so as ye shal heere

¶ How þat the Sowdan / and his Baronage
And alle his liges / sholde yeristned be
And he shal han / Custaunce in mariage
And certeyn gold / I noot what quantitee
And heer to / founden sufficient seuretee
This same acord / was sworn on either syde
Now faire Custaunce / al myghty god thee gyde

¶ Now wolde som men / waiten as I gesse
That I sholde tellen / al the purueiaunce
That Themperour / of his grete noblesse
Hath shapen for his doghter / dame Custaunce
Wel may men knowen / þat so greet ordinaunce
May no man tellen / in a litel clause
As was arrayed / for so heigh a cause

[Bis]shopes been shapen / with hire for to wende [leaf 115, bk]
Lordes / ladies / knyghtes of renoun
And oother folk ynowe / this is thende
And notified is / thurgh out the town

That euery wight with greet deuocioun
Sholde preyen crist þat he this mariage
Receyue in gree / and spede this viage

¶ The day is comen / of hir departynge
I seye / the woful day fatal / is come
That ther may be / no lenger taryynge
But forthward they hem dresse / alle and some
Custaunce / that was with sorwe all ouercome
fful pale arist and dresseth hire to wende
ffor wel she seeth / ther nys noon oother ende

¶ Allas / what wonder is it/ thogh she wepte
That shal be sent to straunge nacion
ffro freendes / þat so tendrely hir kepte
And to be bounden / vndur subieccion
Of oon / she knoweth noght his condicion
Housbondes been alle goode / and han been yoore
That knowen wyues / I dar sey yow namoore

¶ ffader she seyde / thy wrecched child Custaunce
Thy yonge doghter / fostred vp so softe
And ye my moder / my souereyn plesaunce
Ouer alle thyng / outtaken crist on lofte
Custaunce youre child / hir recomaundeth ofte
Vn to your grace / for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I neuere / seen yow moore with eye

¶ Allas / vn to the Barbre nacioñ
I moste anon / syn þat it is youre wille
But crist that starf for oure redempcioñ
So yeue me grace / hise hestes to fulfille
I wrecche womman / no fors thogh I spille
Wommen are born / to thraldom and penaunce
And to been / vnder mannes gouernaunce

¶ I trowe at Troye / whan Pirrus brak' the wal [leaf 116]
Or Ylion / brent hadde Thebes the Citee
Nat Rome / for the harm thurgh Hanybal
That Romayns / hath venquysshed tymes thre
Nas herd / swich tendre wepyng for pitee
As in the chambre was / for hir departynge
But forth she moot' wher so she wepe or synge

¶ O firste moeuer / cruel firmament [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
With thy diurnal sweigh / þat crowdest ay
And hurlest al / fro Est / til Occident
That naturelly / wolde holde another way
Thy crowdyng / set the heuene in swich array
At bigynnyng' of this fiers viage
That cruel Mars / hath slayn this mariage

¶ Infortunat ascendent' tortuous
Of which the lord / is helplees falle allas
Out of his angle / in to the derkest hous
O. Mars / o. Atazir / as in this cas
O fieble Moone / vnhappy been thy pas
Thow knyttest thee / ther thow nart nat receyued
Ther thow were wel / fro thennes artow weyued

¶ Inprudent Emperour of Rome / allas [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
Was ther no Philosophre / in al thy town
Is no tyme bet than oother / in swich cas
Of viage / is ther noon electioun
Namely / to folk of heigh condicioun
Nat whan a roote / is of a burthe yknowe
Allas / we been / to lewed or to slowe

¶ To shipe is broght' this woful faire mayde
Solempnely / with euery circumstaunce
Now Ihesu crist' be with yow alle / she seyde
Ther nys namoore / but fare wel faire Custaunce

She peyneth hire / to make good contenaunce
And forth I lete hir Sayle / in this manere
And turne I wole / agayn to my matere

¶ [T]he moder of the Sowdan / welle of vices [leaf 116, back]
Espied hath / hir sónes pleyn entente
How he wol lete / his olde sacrifices
And right anon / she for hir conseil sente
And they ben come / to knowen what she mente
And whan assembled was / this folk in feere
She sette hir down / and seyde as ye shal heere

¶ Lordes quod she / ye knowen eu*er*ychon
How þ*at* my sone / in point is for to lete
The holy lawes / of oure Alkaron
Yeuen by goddes message[1] Makomete [[1] *a late curl for* er *is over the* e.]
But oon avow / to grete god I hete
The lyf shal rather / out of my body sterte
Than Makometes lawe / out of myn herte

¶ What sholde vs tiden / of this newe lawe
But thraldom to oure bodies / and penaunce
And afterward / in helle to be drawe
ffor we reneyed / Mahoun oure creaunce
But lordes / wol ye maken assuraunce
As I shal seyn / assentyng to my loore
And I shal make vs sauf / for eu*er*e moore

¶ They sworen / and assenten euery man
To lyue w*ith* hire and dye / and by hir stonde
And euerich / in the beste wise he kan
To strengthen hire / shal alle hise freendes fonde
And she hath / this emprise ytake on honde
Which ye shal heren / þ*at* I shal deuyse
And to hem alle / she spak right in this wise

¶ We shul first feyne vs / cristendom to take
Coold water / shal nat greue vs but a lite
And I shal / swich a feste / and reuel make
That as I trowe / I shal the Sowdan quyte
ffor thogh his wyf / be cristned neuer so whyte
She shal haue nede / to wasshe awey the rede
Thogh she / a font ful water with hir lede

¶ O Sowdanesse roote of Iniquitee [leaf 117]
Virago / thow Semyrame the secounde
O Serpent/ vnder femynynytee
Lyk to the Serpent/ depe in helle ybounde
O feyned womman / al that may confounde
Vertu and Innocence / thurgh thy malice
Is bred in thee / as nest of euery vice

¶ O Sathan envyous / syn thilke day
That thow were chaced / from oure heritage
Wel knowestow to wommen / the olde way
Thow madest Eua / brynge vs in seruage
Thow wolt fordoon / this cristen mariage
Thyn Instrument so weylawey the while
Makestow of wommen / whan thou wolt bigile

¶ This Sowdanesse / whom I thus blame and warye
Leet pryuely hir conseil / goon his way
What sholde I in this tale / lenger tarye
She rideth to the Sowdan / on a day
And seyde hym / þat she wolde reneye hir lay
And cristendom / of preestes handes fonge
Repentynge hire / she hethen was so longe

¶ Bisekyng hym / to doon hire that honour
That she moste han / the cristen folk to feste
To plesen hem / I shall do my labour
The Sowdan seith / I wol doon at youre heste

And knelynge / thanketh hire of that requeste
So glad he was / he nyste what to seye
She kiste hir sone / and hom she gooth hir weye

[*PART II.*]

¶ Arryued been this cristen folk to londe
In Surrye / with a gret solempne route
And hastily / this Sowdan sente his sonde
ffirst to his moder / and al the regne aboute
And seyde his wyf / was comen out of doute
And preyde hire / for to ryde agayn the queene
The honour / of his regne to sustene

¶ Greet was the prees / and riche was tharray [leaf 117, back]
Of Surryens / and Romayns met yfeere
The moder of the Sowdan / riche and gay
Receyueth hire / with also glad a cheere
As any moder / myghte hir doghter deere
And to the nexte Citee / ther bisyde
A softe paas / solempnely they ryde

¶ Naught trowe I / the triumphe of Iulius
Of which þat lucan / maketh swich a boost
Was roiallour / ne moore curyus
Than was the assemblee / of this blisful oost
But this scorpion / this wikked goost
The Sowdanesse / for al hir flaterynge
Caste vnder this / ful mortally to stynge

¶ The Sowdan cometh hym self / soone after this
So roially / þat wonder is to telle
He welcometh hire / with alle ioye and blys
And thus in myrthe and Ioye / I lete hem dwelle

The fruyt of this matere / is þat I telle
Whan tyme cam / men thoughte it for the beste
That reuel stynte / and men go to hir reste

¶ The tyme cam / this olde Sowdanesse
Ordeyned hath this feste / of which I tolde
And to the feste / cristen folk hem dresse
In general / ye bothe yonge and olde
Heer may men feste / and roialtee biholde
And deyntees mo / than I kan yow deuyse
But al to deere / they boghte it er they ryse

¶ O sodeyn wo / that euere art Successour [*Latin notes*, p. 133.]
To worldly blisse / spreynd with bitternesse
The ende of the ioye / of oure worldly labour
Wo ocupieth / the fyn of oure gladnesse
Herke this conseil / for thy sikernesse
Vp on thy glade day / haue in thy mynde
The vnwar wo / or harm / þat comth bihynde

¶ ffor shortly / for to tellen / at a word [leaf 118]
The Sowdan / and the cristen euerychone
Been al to-hewe / and stiked at the bord
But it were oonly / dame Custaunce allone
This olde sowdanesse / cursed krone
Hath with hir freendes / doon this cursed dede
ffor she hir self / wolde al the contree lede

¶ Ne ther nas Surryen noon / þat was conuerted
That of the conseil / of the Sowdan woot
That he nas al tohewe / er he asterted
And Custaunce / han they take anon foot hoot
And in a ship / al sterelees / god woot
They han hir set and bidde hir lerne Sayle
Out of Surrye / agaynward to Itaille

¶ A certein tresor / that she thider ladde
And sooth to seyn / vitaille gret plentee
They han hir yeuen / and clothes eek she hadde
And forth she sayleth / in the salte see
O my Custaunce / ful of benygnytee
O Emperours / yonge doghter deere
He þat is lord of ffortune be thy steere

¶ She blisseth hire / and with ful pitous voys
Vn to the cros of Crist/ thus seyde she
O clere / o weleful Auter / holy croys
Reed of the lambes blood / ful of pitee
That wesshe the world / fro the olde Iniquitee
Me fro the feend / and fro his clawes kepe
That day / þat I shal drenchen in the depe

¶ Victorious tree / proteccion of trewe
That oonly / worthy were for to bere
The kyng of heuene / with his woundes newe
The white lamb / that hurt was with a spere
fflemere of feendes / out of hym and here
On which thy lymes / feithfully extenden
Me kepe / and yeue me myght my lyf tamenden

[Ye]res and dayes / fleet this creature [leaf 118, back]
Thurgh out the see of Grece / vn to the Strayte
Of Marrok as it was hir auenture
O many a sory meel / now may she bayte
After hir deth / ful often may she wayte
Er þat the wilde wawes / wol hir dryue
Vn to the place / ther she shal arryue

Men myghten axen / why she was noght slayn
Eek at the feste / who myghte hir body saue
And I answere / to that demaunde agayn
Who saued Danyel / in the horrible Caue

Ther euery wight saue he / maister and knaue
Was with the leon frete / er he asterte
No wight but god / þat he bar in his herte

¶ God liste to shewe / his wonderful miracle
In hire / for we sholde seen / his myghty werkes
Crist/ which þat is / to euery harm triacle
By certein menes ofte / as knowen clerkes
Dooth thyng for certein ende / þat ful derk is
To mannes wit þat for oure ignoraunce
Ne konne noght knowe / his prudent purueiaunce

¶ Now sith she was nat / at the feste yslawe
Who kepte hire / fro the drenchyng in the see
Who kepte Ionas / in the fisshes mawe
Til he / was spowted vp at Nynyuee
Wel may men knowe / it was no wight but hee
That kepte peple Ebrayk / from hir drenchyng
With drye feet thurgh out the see passyng

¶ Who bad / the foure Spiritz of tempest
That power han / tanoyen lond and See.
Bothe North and South / and also west and Est
Anoyeth neither / See / ne land / ne tree
Soothly / the comaundour of that was hee
That fro the tempest ay this womman kepte
As wel / whan she wook as whan she slepte

¶ Wher myghte this woman / mete and drynke haue [H 119]
Thre yeer and moore / how lasteth hir vitaille
Who fedde the Egipcien Marie / in the Caue
Or in desert / no wight but crist sanz faille
fyue thousand folk / it was as greet meruaille
With loues fyue / and fisshes two to fede
God sente his foyson / at hir grete nede

¶ She dryueth forth / in to oure Occian
Thurgh out the wilde see / til at the laste
Vnder an hoold / þat nempnen I ne kan
ffer in Northumberland / the wawe hir caste
And in the sond / hir shipe stiked so faste
That thennes wolde it noght of al a tyde
The wyl of crist was þat she sholde abyde

¶ The Constable of the Castel / down is fare
To seen this wrak and al the shipe he soghte
And foond this wery womman ful of care
He foond also / the tresor þat she broghte
In hir langage / mercy she bisoghte
The lyf / out of hir body for to twynne
Hir to deliuere / of wo that she was Inne.

¶ A manere latyn corrupt was hir speche
But algates / ther by was she vnderstonde
The Constable / whan hym liste no lenger seche
This woful womman / broghte he to the londe
She kneleth doun / and thanketh goddes sonde
But what she was / she wolde no man seye
ffor foul ne fair / thogh þat she sholde deye

¶ She seyde / she was so mazed in the See
That she forgat hir mynde / by hir trouthe
The Constable / hath of hire so greet pitee
And eek his wyf / that they wepten for routhe
She was so diligent with outen slouthe
To serue and plese / euerich in that place
That alle hir louen / that looken on hir face

This Constable / and dame Hermengyld his wyf [leaf 110, back]
Were payens / and that contree euery where
But hermengyld / loued hire right as hir lyf.
And Custaunce / hath so longe soiourned there

In orisons / with many a bitter teere
Til Ihesu / hath conuerted thurgh his grace
Dame hermengyld / Constablesse of thilke place 539

¶ In al that land / no cristen dorste route
Alle cristen folk/ been fled fro that contree
Thurgh Payens / þat conquereden al aboute
The plages of the North / by land and see 543
To Walys / fledde the cristianytee
Of olde Britons / dwellyng in this Ile
Ther was hir refut for the mene while 546

¶ But yet nere cristen Britons / so exiled
That ther nere somme / þat in hir pryuetee
Honoured crist and hethen folk bigiled
And neigh the Castel / swiche ther dwelten thre 550
That oon of hem / was blynd and myghte nat se
But it were / with thilke eyen of his mynde
With whiche men seen / after þat they been blynde 553

¶ Bright was the sonne / as in that Someres day
ffor which the Constable / and his wyf also
And Custaunce / han ytake the righte way
Toward the see / a furlong wey / or two 557
To pleyen / and to romen to and fro
And in hir walk this blynde man they mette
Croked and old / with eyen faste yshette 560

¶ In name of Crist cryde this blynde Britoun
Dame Hermengyld / yif me my sighte agayn
This lady / weex affrayed of the sown
Lest þat hir housbonde / shortly for to sayn 564
Wolde hire / for Ihesu cristes loue han slayn
Til Custaunce made hir boold / and bad hir wirche
The wyl of Crist as doghter of his chirche 567

¶ The Constable / weex abasshed of that sight' [leaf 120]
And seide / What amounteth al this fare
Custaunce answerde / sire it is Cristes myght'
That helpeth folk / out of the feendes snare
And so ferforth / she gan oure lay declare
That she the Constable / er þat it was eue
Conuerteth / and on Crist made hym bileue

¶ This Constable / was no thyng' lord of this place
Of which I speek' ther he Custaunce fond
But kepte it strongly / many wynter space
Vnder Alla / kyng of al Northumberlond'
That was ful wys / and worthy of his hond'
Agayn the Scottes / as men may wel heere
But turne I wole / agayn to my matere

¶ Sathan / þat euere vs waiteth to bigile
Saugh of Custaunce / al hir perfeccioũ
And caste anon / how he myghte quite hir while
And made a yong knyght' þat dwelte in that town
Loue hire hote / of foul affeccioun
That verraily / hym thoughte he sholde spille
But he of hire / myghte ones haue his wille

¶ He woweth hire / but it auailleth noght'
She wolde do no synne / by no weye
And for despit' he compassed in his thoght'
To maken hire / on shameful deeth to deye
He wayteth / whan the Constable was aweye
And priuely / vp on a nyght he crepte
In Hermengildes chambre / whil she slepte

¶ Wery for-waked / in hir orisons
Slepeth Custaunce / and hermengild also
This knyght' thurgh Sathans temptacions
Al softely / is to the bed ygo

And kitte the throte / of Hermengild atwo
And leyde the blody knyf / by dame Custaunce
And wente his wey / ther god yeue hym meschaunce 602

[So]one after / cometh this Constable hom agayn [leaf 120, back]
And eek Alla / that kyng was of that lond
And saw his wyf / despitously yslayn
ffor which ful ofte / he weepe and wrong his hond 606
And in the bed / the blody knyf he fond
By dame Custaunce / allas what myghte she seye
ffor verray wo / hir wit was al aweye 609

¶ To kyng Alla / was told al this meschaunce
And eek the tyme / and where / and in what wise
That in a shipe / was founde this Custaunce
As her biforn / þat ye han herd deuyse 613
The kynges herte / of pitee gan agryse
Whan he saw / so benygne a creature
ffalle in disese / and in mysauenture 616

¶ ffor as the lomb / toward his deeth is broght
So stant this Innocent bifore the kyng
This false knyght þat hath this treson wrogh
Bereth hire on hond / þat she hath doon this thyng 620
But nathelees / ther was greet moornyng
Among the peple / and seyn they kan nat gesse
That she had doon / so greet a wikkednesse 623

¶ ffor they han seyn hire / euere so vertuous
And louyng Hermengild / right as hir lyf
Of this baar witnesse / euerich in that hous
Saue he þat Hermengild / slow with his knyf 627
This gentil kyng hath caught a gret motyf
Of this witnesse / and thoghte he wolde enquere
Depper in this / a trouthe for to lere 630

¶ Allas Custaunce / thow nast no champioñ
Ne fighte kanstow noght' so weilawey
But he þat starf / for oure redempcioñ
And bond Sathan / and yet lyth ther he lay
So be thy stronge champion this day
ffor but if Crist / open miracle kythe
With outen gilt' thow shalt been slayn as swythe

¶ She sette hir down on knees / and thus she sayde [leaf 121]
Immortal god / that sauedest Susanne
ffro fals blame / and thow merciful mayde
Marie I mene / doghter to Seint Anne
Biforn whos child / Aungels synge Osanne
If I be giltlees / of this felonye
My socour be / for ellis shal I dye

¶ Haue ye nat seyn som tyme / a pale face
Among a prees / of hym þat hath be lad
Toward his deeth / wher as hym gat no grace
And swich a colour / in his face hath had
Men myghte knowe his face / þat was bistad
Amonges alle the faces / in that route
So stant Custance / and looketh hire aboute

¶ O Queenes / lyuynge in prosperitee
Duchesses / and ye ladies euerichon
Haueth som reuthe / on hir aduersitee
An Emperours doghter / stant allone
She hath no wight' / to whom to make hir mone
O blood roial / that stondest in this drede
ffer be thy freendes / at thy grete nede

¶ This Alla kyng' hath swich compassioun
As gentil herte / is fulfild of pitee
That from his eyen / ran the water doun
Now hastily / do fecche a book / quod he

And if this knyght'. wol sweren how þat she
This womman slow / yet wol we vs auyse
Whom þat we wole / that shal been oure Iustise

A Briton book' writen with Euaungiles
Was fet' and on this book he swoor anon
She gilty was / and in the mene whiles
An hand hym smoot' vp on the nekke bon
That doun he fel / atones / as a stoon
And bothe hise eyen / broste out of his face
In sighte / of euery body in that place

[A vo]ys was herd / in general audience [leaf 121, back]
And seyde / thow hast disclaundred giltles
The doghter of holy chirche / in heigh presence
Thus hastow doon / and yet I holde my pees
Of this meruaille / agast was al the prees
As mazed folk / they stoden euerychone
ffor drede of wreche / saue Custance allone

¶ Greet was the drede / and eek the repentaunce
Of hem / þat hadden wrong suspecioñ
Vp on / this sely Innocent Custaunce
And for this miracle / in conclusioñ
And by Custaunces mediacioñ
The kyng' and many another in that place
Conuerted was / thanked be Cristes grace

¶ This false knyght was slayn for his vntrouthe
By Iuggement of Alla hastily
And yet Custaunce / hadde of his deeth greet routhe
And after this / Ihesus of his mercy
Made Alla / wedden ful solempnely
This holy mayden / þat is so bright and shene
And thus hath Crist' maad Custance a queene

¶ But who was woful / if I shal nat lye
Of this weddyng' but Donegild and namo
The kynges moder / ful of tirannye
Hir thoughte / hir cursed herte brast atwo
She wolde noght' hir sone had doon so
Hir thoughte a despit' þat he sholde take
So straunge a creature / vn to his make

¶ Me list nat' of the chaf / ne of the stree
Maken so long a tale / as of the corn
What sholde I tellen / of the realtee
At mariages / or which cours gooth biforn
Who bloweth in trompe / or in an horn
The fruyt of euery tale / is for to seye
They ete and drynke / and daunce / & synge & pleye

¶ They goon to bedde as it was skile and right' [leaf 122]
ffor though þat wyues / been ful holy thynges
They moste take / in pacience at nyght'
Swich manere necessaries / as been plesynges
To folk / that han ywedded hem with rynges
And laye a lite / hir holynesse asyde
As for the tyme / it may noon oother bityde

¶ On hire / he gat a knaue child anon
And to a bisshope / and his Constable eke
He took his wyf to kepe / whan he is gon
To Scotlond'ward / his foomen for to seke
Now faire Custaunce / þat is so humble & meke
So longe is goon with childe / til þat stille
She halt hir chambre / abidyng' cristes wille

¶ The tyme is come / a knaue child she beer
Mauricius at the font stoon / they hym calle
This Constable / dooth forth come a Messager
And wroot vn to his kyng' þat clepyd was Alle

How þat / this blisful tidynge is bifalle
And othere tidynges / speedful for to seye
He tath the lettre / and forth he goth his weye

¶ This Messager / to doon his auauntage
Vn to the kynges moder / rideth swithe
And salueth ful faire / in his langage
Ma dame quod he / ye may be glad and blithe
And thanketh god / an hundred thousand sithe
My lady queene / hath child with outen doute
To ioye and blisse / of al this regne aboute

¶ Lo here the lettres / seled of this thyng'
That I moot bere / with al the haste I may
If ye wol aught' vn to youre sone the kyng'
I am youre seruaunt' bothe nyght and day
Donegild answerde / as now at this tyme nay
But here al nyght' I wol thow take thy reste
To morwe / wol I seye thee what me leste

[Thi]s Messager / drank sadly ale and wyn [leaf 122, back]
And stolen were / his lettres pryuely
Out of his box / whil he sleep as a swyn
And countrefeted / was ful subtilly
Another lettre / wroght ful synfully
Vn to the kyng direct' of this matere
ffro his Constable / as ye shal after heere

¶ The lettre spak/ the queene deliuered was
Of so horrible / a fendlich creature
That in the Castel / noon so hardy was
That any while / dorste ther endure
The moder was an Elf / by auenture
Yeomen / by charmes / or by sorcerye
And euerich / hateth hir compaignye

¶ Wo was this kyng' whan he this lettre hadde seyn
But to no wight' he tolde his sorwes soore
But of his owene hond./ he wroot ageyn
Welcome the sonde of Crist / for euere moore
To me / þat am now lerned in his loore
Lord / welcome be thy lust' and thy plesaunce
My lust' I putte al in thyn ordinaunce

¶ Kepeth this child / al be it foul or feir
And eek my wyf / vn to myn hom comynge
Crist whan hym list' may sende me an heir
Moore agreable than this / to my likynge
This lettre he seleth / pryuely wepynge
Which to the Messager / was take soone
And forth he goth / ther is namoore to doone

¶ O Messager / fulfild of dronkenesse [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
Strong is thy breeth / thy lymes faltren ay
And thow biwreyest' al secrenesse
The mynde is lorn / thow ianglest as a Iay
Thy face is turned / in a newe array
Ther dronkenesse regneth / in any route
Ther is no conseil hid / with outen doute

¶ O Donegild / I ne haue noon englissh̄ digne [leaf 123]
Vn to thy malice / and thy tirannye
And ther fore / to the feend I thee resigne
Lat hym enditen / of thy traitorie
ffy mannyssh fy / o nay by god I lye
ffy fendlich spirit' for I dar wel telle
Thogh thow heere walke / thy spirit is in helle

¶ This Messager / comth fro the kyng agayn
And at the kynges modres Court he lighte
And she was / of this Messager ful fayn
And plesed hym / in al that euere she myghte

He drank / and wel his girdel vnder pighte
He slepeth / and he fnorteth in his gyse
Al nyght til the sonne gan aryse

¶ Eft were his lettres / stolen euerichon
And countrefeted lettres / in this wyse
The kyng comaundeth / his Constable anon
Vp peyne of hangyng and on heigh Iuyse
That he ne sholde suffren / in no wyse
Custance / in with his regne for tabyde
Thre dayes / and a quarter of o tyde

¶ But in the same Shipe / as he hir fond
Hire and hir yonge sone / and al hir geere
He sholde putte / and crowde hir fro the lond
And charge hire / þat she neuere eft coome there
O my Custaunce / wel may thy goost haue fere
And slepyng in thy dreem / been in penaunce
Whan Donegild / caste al this ordinaunce

¶ This Messager / on morwe whan he wook
Vn to the Castel / halt the nexte wey
And to the Constable / he the lettre took
And whan þat he / this pitous lettre sey
ful ofte / he seyde allas and weilawey
Lord crist quod he / how may this world endure
So ful of synne / is many a creature.

[O] myghty god / if that it be thy wille [leaf 123, back]
Sith thow art rightful Iuge / how may it be
That thow wolt suffren / Innocentz to spille
And wikked folk / regnen in prosperitee
O goode Custaunce / allas so wo is me
That I moot be thy tormentour / or deye
On shames deeth / ther nys noon oother weye

¶ Wepen bothe yonge and olde / in al that place
Whan þat the kyng' this cursed lettre sente
And Custance / with a dedly pale face
The ferthe day / toward hir shipe she wente
But nathelees / she taketh in good entente
The wyl of Crist / and knelyng on the Stronde
She seyde lord / ay wel come be thy sonde

¶ He þat me kepte / fro the false blame
Whil I was on the lond / amonges yow
He kan me kepe / fro harm and eek fro shame
In salte see / al thogh I se noght how
As strong as euere he was / he is yet now
In hym triste I / and in his moder deere
That is to me / my Sayl and eek my steere

¶ Hir litel child / lay wepyng in hir arm
And knelyng' pitously to hym she seyde
Pees litel sone / I wol do thee noon harm
With that hir couerchief' / ouer hir hed she breyde
And ouer his litel eyen / she it leyde
And in hir arm / she lulleth it ful faste
And in to heuene / hir eyen vp she caste

¶ Moder quod she / and mayden bright Marie
Sooth is / þat thurgh wommans eggement'
Mankynde was lorn / and dampned ay to dye
ffor which thy child / was on a croys yrent'
Thy blisful eyen / sawe al his torment'
Thanne is ther / no comparison bitwene
Thy wo / and any wo man may sustene

¶ Thow saw thy child / yslayn bifor thyne eyen [leaf 124]
And yet now / lyueth my litel child parfay
Now lady bright' to whom alle woful cryen
Thow glorie of wommanhod / thow faire may

Thow hauen of refut' brighte sterre of day
Rewe on my child / that of thy gentillesse
Rewest' on euery rewful in distresse

¶ O litel child / allas what is thy gilt'
That neuere wroghtest synne / as yet *par*dee
Why wil thyn harde fader / han thee spilt'
O mercy deere Constable / quod she
As lat my litel child / dwelle here with thee
And if thow darst nogh't sauen hym for blame
So kys hym ones / in his fader name

¶ Ther with she looketh / bakward to the londe
And seyde / fare wel housbonde routhelees
And vp she rist' and walketh doun the Stronde
Toward the shipe / hir folweth al the prees
And euere / she preyeth hir child / to holde his pees
And taketh hir leue / and with an holy entente
She blesseth hire / and in to shipe she wente

¶ Vitailled was the shipe / it is no drede
Habundantly for hire / *ful longe space*
And othere necessaries / *þat sholde nede*
She hadde ynow / heryed be *goddes grace*
ffor wynd and weder / *almyghty god purchace*
And brynge hir hom / I *kan no bettre seye*
But in the see / she dryueth *forth hir weye*

[*PART III.*]

¶ Alla the kyng' comth hom soone after this
Vn to his Castel / of the which I tolde
And axeth / where his wyf / and his child is
The Constable / gan aboute his herte colde

And pleynly / al the manere he hym tolde
As ye han herd / I kan telle it no bettre
And sheweth the kyng' his seel and his lettre

[A]nd seyde lord / as ye comaunded me [leaf 124, back]
Vp peyne of deeth / so haue I do certein
This Messager / tormented was / til he
Moste biknowe / and tellen plat and pleyn
ffro nyght to nyght' in what place he had leyn
And thus by wit' and subtil enquerynge
Ymagined was / by whom this harm gan sprynge

¶ The hond was knowe / þat the lettre wroot'
And al the venym / of this cursed dede
But in what wise / certeynly I noot'
Theffect is this / þat Alla out of drede
His moder slow / that may men pleynly rede
ffor that she traytour was / to hir ligeaunce
Thus endeth olde Donegild with meschaunce

¶ The sorwe þat this Alla / nyght and day
Maketh for his wyf / and for his child also
Ther is no tonge / that it telle may
But now wol I / vn to Custaunce go
That fleteth in the See / in peyne and wo
ffyue yeer and moore / as liked Cristes sonde
Er þat hir shipe / approched vn to londe

¶ Vnder an hethen Castel / atte laste
Of which the name / in my text noght I fynde
Custaunce and eek hir child / the see vp caste
Almyghty god / that saueth al mankynde
Haue on Custaunce / and on hir child som mynde
That fallen is / in hethen hand eft soone
In point to spille / as I shal telle yow soone

¶ Down fro the Castel / comth ther many a wight'
To gauren on this Shipe / and on Custaunce
But shortly from the Castel / on a nyght'
The lordes Styward / god yeue hym meschaunce 914
A theef / that hadde reneyed oure creaunce
Cam in to shipe allone / and seyde he sholde
Hir lemman be / wher so she wolde or nolde 917

¶ Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon [leaf 125]
Hir child cryde / and she cryde pitously
But blisful Marie / heelp hire right anon
ffor with hir strogelyng' wel and myghtily 921
The theef / fil ouer bord / al sodeynly
And in the see / he dreynte for vengeaunce
And thus hath Crist' vnwemmed kept Custaunce 924

¶ O foule lust of luxurie / lo thyn ende [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
Nat oonly / þat thou fayntest mannes mynde
But verraily / thow wolt his body shende
Thende of thy werk/ or of thy lustes blynde 928
Is compleynyng' how many oon may men fynde
That noght for werk' som tyme / but for thentente
To doon this synne / been outher slayn or shente 931

¶ How may this wayke womman / han this strengthe
Hir to defende / agayn this renegat'
O. Golias / vnmesurable of lengthe
How myghte dauid / make thee so maat 935
So yong' and of armure so desolat'
How dorste he looke / vp on thy dredful face
Wel may men seen / it was but goddes grace 938

¶ Who yaf Iudith / corage / or hardynesse
To sleen hym Olofernus / in his tente
And to deliueren / out of wrecchednesse
The peple of god / I sey for this entente 942

That right as god / spirit of vigour sente
To hem / and saued hem / out of meschaunce
So sente he myght and vigour to Custaunce

¶ fforth gooth hir shipe / thurgh out the narwe mouth
Of Iubaltare / and Septe / dryuyng ay
Som tyme West and som tyme North and South
And som tyme Est ful many a wery day
Til Cristes moder / blissed be she ay
Hath shapen / thurgh hir endelees goodnesse
To make an ende / of al hir heuynesse

[N]ow lat vs stynte of Custaunce / but a throwe [leaf 125, bk]
And speke we / of the Romayn Emperour
That out of Surrye / hath by lettres knowe
The slaughtre of cristen folk / and dishonour
Doon to his doghter / by a fals traytour
I mene / the cursed wikked Sowdanesse
That at the feeste / leet sleen bothe moore and lesse

¶ ffor which this Emperour / hath sent anon
His Senatour / with Roial ordinaunce
And othere lordes / god woot many oon
On Surryens / to taken heigh vengeaunce
They brennen / sleen / and brynge hem to meschaunce
fful many a day / but shortly this is thende
Homward to Rome / they shapen hem to wende

¶ This senatour / repaireth with Victorie
To Romeward / saylynge ful Roially
And mette the ship dryuynge / as seith the stori
In which Custaunce / sit ful pitously
No thyng ne knew he / what she was / ne why
She was in swich array / ne she nyl seye
Of hir estaat thogh she sholde deye

¶ He bryngeth hire to Rome / and to his wyf
He yaf hire / and hir yonge sone also
And with the Senatour / she ladde hir lyf
Thus kan oure lady / bryngen out of wo Maria mater omnium virtutum. [*in a late hand*]
Woful Custaunce / and many another mo
And longe tyme / dwelled she in that place
In holy werkes eu*er*e / as was hir grace R Wryne [*in the same late hand*] 980

¶ The senatours wyf / hir Aunte was
But for al that' she knew hir neu*er* the moore
I wol no lenger / taryen in this cas
But to kyng Alla / which I spak of yoore 984
That for his wyf' / wepeth and siketh soore
I wol retourne / and lete I wole Custaunce
Vnder the Senatours gouernaunce 987

¶ Kyng Alla / which þ*at* hadde his moder slayn [leaf 126]
Vp on a day / fil in swich repentaunce
That if I shortly / tellen shal and playn
To Rome he cometh / to receyuen his penaunce 991
And putte hym / in the Popes ordinaunce
In heigh and logh / and Ihesu Crist bisoghte
fforyeue / his wikked werkes þ*at* he wroghte 994

¶ The fame anon / thurgh Rome town is born
How Alla kyng' shal comen in pilgrymage
By herbergeours / that wenten hym biforn
ffor which the Senatour / as was vsage 998
Rood hym agayns / and many of his lynage
As wel to shewen / his heighe magnyficence
As to doon / any kyng a reuerence 1001

¶ Greet cheere / doth this noble Senatour
To kyng Alla / and he to hym also
Euerich of hem / dooth oother greet honour
And so bifel / þ*at* in a day / or two 1005

This Senatour / is to kyng Alla go
To feste / and shortly / if I shal nat lye
Custaunces sone / wente in his compaignye

¶ Som men wolde seyn / at requeste of Custaunce
This Senatour / hath lad this child to feste
I may nat tellen / euerich circumstaunce
Be as be may / ther was he atte leste
But sooth is this / þat at his modres heste
Biforn Alla / duryng the metes space
The child stood / lookynge in the kynges face

¶ This Alla kyng hath of this child greet wonder
And to the Senatour / he seyde anon
Whos is that faire child / that stondeth yonder
I noot quod he / by god and by Seint Iohn
A moder he hath / but fader hath he non
That I of woot / and shortly in a stounde
He tolde Alla / how þat this child was founde

[Bu]t god woot quod this Senatour also [leaf 126, back]
So vertuous a lyuere / in my lyf
Ne saw I neuere as she / ne herde of mo
Of worldly wommen / mayde ne of wyf
I dar wel seyn / hir hadde leuere a knyf
Thurgh out hir brest / than been a womman wikke
Ther is no man / koude brynge hire to that prikke

¶ Now was this child / as lyk vn to Custaunce
As possible is / a creature to be
This Alla / hath the face in remembraunce
Of dame Custaunce / and ther on mused he
If þat the childes moder / were aught she
That is his wyf / and pryuely he sighte
And spedde hym fro the table that he myghte

¶ *Parfay* thoughte he / fantome is in myn heed
I oghte deme / of skilful Iugement
That in the salte see / my wif is deed
And afterward / he made his argument
What woot I / if *þat* Crist hath hider sent
My wif by see / as wel as he hir sente
To my contree / from thennes *þat* she wente

¶ And after noon / hom with the Senatour
Goth Allâ / for to seen this wonder chaunce
This Senatour / dooth Alla greet honour
And hastily / he sente after Custaunce
But tristeth wel / hir liste noght to daunce
Whan that she wiste / wher fore was that sonde
Vnnethe / vp on hir feet she myghte stonde

¶ Whan Alla saugh his wyf / faire he hir grette
And weepe / that it was routhe for to se
ffor at the firste look / he on hir sette
He knew wel verraily / *þat* it was she
And she for sorwe / as domb stant as a tree
So was hir herte shet in hir distresse
Whan she remembred / his vnkyndenesse

¶ Twies she swowneth / in his owene sighte [leaf 127]
He weepe / and hym excuseth pitously
Now god quod he / and his halwes brighte
So wisly on my soule / as haue mercy
That of youre harm / as giltlees am I.
As is Maurice my sone / so lyk youre face
Ellis the feend / me fecche out of this place

¶ Long was the sobbyng and the bitter peyne
Er *þat* / hir woful hertes myghte cesse
Greet was the pitee / for to heere hem pleyne
Thurgh whiche pleintes / gan hir wo encresse

I pray yow / al my labour to rclesse
I may nat telle hir wo / vn til to morwe
I am so wery / for to speke of sorwe 1071

¶ But finally / whan þat the sooth is wist/
That Alla / giltlees was of hir wo
I trowe / an hundred tymes been they kist
And swich a blisse / is ther bitwix hem two 1075
That saue the ioye / þat lasteth euer*e*mo
Ther is noon lyk / þat any creature
Hath seyn / or shal / whil þat the world may dure 1078

¶ Tho preyde she / hir housbond mekely
In relief / of hir longe pitous pyne
That he wolde praye / hir fader specially
That of his magestee / he wolde enclyne 1082
To vouche sauf / som day with hym to dyne
She preyde hym eek he sholde by no weye
Vn to hir fader / no word of hir seye 1085

¶ Som men wolde seyn / how þat the child Mauryce
Dooth this message / vn to this Emp*e*rour
But as I gesse / Alla was noght so nyce
To hym þat was / of so souereyn honour 1089
As he þat is / of cristen folk the flour
Sente any child / but it is bet to deme
He wente hym self and so it may wel seme 1092

[Thi]s Emp*e*rour / hath graunted gentilly [leaf 127, back]
To come to dyner / as he hym bisoghte
And wel rede I / he looked bisily
Vp on this child / and on his doghter thoghte 1096
Alla gooth to his In / and as hym oghte
Arrayed for this feste in euery wise
As ferforth / as his konnyng may suffise 1099

¶ The morwe cam / and Alla gan hym dresse
And eek his wyf / this Emperour to meete
And forth they ryde / in Ioye and in gladnesse
And whan she say / hir fader in the Streete
She lighte doun / and falleth hym to feete
ffader quod she / youre yonge child Custaunce
Is now ful clene / out of youre remembraunce

¶ I am youre doghter Custance / quod she
That whilom ye han sent / vn to Surrye
It am I fader / that in the salte See
Was put allone / and dampned for to dye
Now goode fader / mercy I yow crye
Seend me namoore / vn to noon hethenesse
But thonke my lord heere / of his kyndenesse

¶ Who kan the pitous Ioye / tellen al
Bitwix hem thre / syn they be thus ymette
But of my tale / make an ende I shal
The day goth faste / I wol no lenger lette
This glade folk to dyner they hem sette
In ioye and blisse / at mete I lete hem dwelle
A thousand fold / wel moore than I kan telle

¶ This child Maurice / was sithen Emperour
Maad by the Pope / and lyued cristenly
To cristes chirche / he dide greet honour
But I lete / al this storie passen by
Of Custaunce / is my tale specially
In the olde Romayn gestes / may men fynde
Maurices lyf / I bere it noght in mynde

¶ This kyng Alla / whan he his tyme say [leaf 128]
With his Custaunce / his holy wif so sweto
To Engelond / been they com the righte way
Wher as they lyue / in ioye and in quiete

But litel while it lasteth I yow heete [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
Ioye of this world / for tyme wol nat abyde
ffro day to nyght' it chaungeth as the tyde

¶ Who lyued eu*er*e / in swich delit / a day
That hym ne moeued / outher Conscience [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
Or Ire / or talent' or som kyn affray
Enuye / or pryde / or passion / or offence
I ne seye / but for this ende this sentence
That litel while / in ioye / or in plesaunce
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custaunce

¶ ffor deeth that taketh / of heigh and logh his rente
Whan passed was a yeer / euene as I gesse
Out of this world / this kyng Alla he hente
ffor whom Custaunce / hath ful greet heuynesse
Now lat vs prayen god / his soule blesse
And dame Custance / fynally to seye
Toward the town of Rome / gooth hir weye

¶ To Rome is come / this holy creature
And fyndeth hir freendss / hoole and sownde
Now is she scaped / al hir auenture
And whan that she / hir fader hath yfownde
Doun on hir knees / falleth she to grownd
Wepynge for tendrenesse / in herte blythe
She herieth god / an hondred thousand sythe

¶ In vertue / and holy alm*es*-dede
They lyuen alle / and neuere asonder wende
Til deeth departeth hem / this lyf they lede
And fareth now wel / my tale is at an ende
Now Ih*es*u crist' that of his myght may sende
Ioye after wo / gouerne vs in his *grace*
And kepe vs alle / that been in this place Amen.

¶ Here is ended / the tale / of the man of Lawe.

¶ Here bigynneth / the Squiers tale ☙ [leaf 129]

AT Sarray / in the land of Tartarye
Ther dwelte a kyng' that werreyed Russye
Thurgh which / ther deyde many a doghty man
This noble kyng' was clepid kambynskan[1] [1 ? MS kambyuskan]
Which in his tyme / was of so greet renoun
That ther nas nowher in no Regioun
So excellent a lord / in alle thyng'
Hym lakked nogh' þat longed to a kyng'
As of the secte / of which þat he was born
He kepte his lay / to which þat he was sworn
And ther to / he was hardy / wys / and riche
Pietous and Iust' and euere moore yliche
Sooth of his word / benigne and honurable
Of his corage / as any Centre stable ¶ Centrum circuli.
Yong' fressh̄ / and strong' in armes desirous
As any Bachiler / of al his hous
A fair persone he was / and fortunat'
And kepte alwey / so wel Roial estat'
That ther nas no wher / swich another man
¶ This noble kyng / this Tartre Cambynskan
Hadde two sones / on Elfeta his wyf'
Of whiche / the eldeste highte Algarsyf/
That oother sone / was clepid Cambalo
A doghter hadde / this worthy kyng also
That yongest' was / and highte Canacee
But for to telle yow / al hir beautee
It lyth nat in my tonge / nyn my konnyng'
I dar nat vndertake / so heigh a thyng'

Myn englyssh eek / is insufficient
It moste been / a Rethor excellent
That koude his colours / longyng for that Art
If he sholde hire / discryuen euery part
I am noon swich / I moot speke as I kan
And so bifel / that whan this kambynskan
Hath .xx. wynter / born his dyademe
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer I deme
[He leet[1]] the feste / of his Natiuitee [[1] *Rats.* leaf 129, back]
[[1]Do]n crien / thurgh out Sarray his Citee
The laste Idus of March / after the yeer
Phebus the sonne / ful iolyf was and cleer
ffor he was ny his exaltacion
In Martes face / and his mansion
In Aries / the Coleryk hote signe
fful lusty was the weder / and benygne
ffor which the foweles / agayn the sonne shene
What for the seson / and the yonge grene
fful loude songen / hir affeccions
Hem semed / han geten hem *pro*teccions
Agayn the swerd of wynter / kene and cold
¶ This Cambynskan / of which I haue yow told
In Roial vestyment sit on his deys
With dyademe / ful hye in his paleys
And halt his feste / solempne and so riche
That in this world / ne was ther noon it liche
Of which / if I shal tellen al tharray
Thanne wolde it ocupie / a some*r*es day
And eek it nedeth nat/ to deuyse
At eue*r*y cours / the ordre of hir seruyse
I wol nat tellen / of hir straunge sewes
Ne of her swannes / ne of hir heron sewes
Eek in that land / as tellen knyghtes olde
Ther is som mete / *þat* is ful deyntee holde
That in this land / men recche of it but smal
Ther nys no man / *þat* may reporten al

I wol nat tarien yow / for it is pryme
And for it is no fruyt' but los of tyme
Vn to my firste / I wol haue my recours
¶ And so bifel / þat after the thridde Cours
Whil þat this kyng' sit thus / in his nobleye
Herknynge his Mynstrals / hir thynges pleye
Biforn hym at the bord / deliciously
In at the halle dore / al sodeynly
Ther cam a knyght' vp on a Steede of bras
And in his hand / a brood Mirour of glas
Vp on his thombe / he hadde / of gold a ryng'
And by his syde / a naked swerd hangyng'
And vp he rydeth / to the heighe bord [leaf 130]
In al the halle / ne was ther spoke a word
ffor merueille of this knyght' hym to biholde
fful bisily / they wayten / yonge and olde
¶ This straunge knyght' that cam thus sodeynly
Al armed saue his heed / ful richely
Salueth kyng' and queene / and lordes alle
By ordre / as they seten in the halle
With so heigh reuerence / and obeisañces
As wel in his speche / as in his contenañces
That Gawayn / with his olde curteisye
Thogh he were come agayn / out of ffairye
Ne koude hym nat amende / with a word
And after this / biforn the hye bord
He with a manly voys / seyde his message
After the forme / vsed in his langage
With outen vice / of silable / or of lettre
And for his tale / sholde seme the bettre
Acordant to his wordes / was his cheere
As techeth art' of speche / hem þat it leere
Al be / þat I kan nat sowne / his style
Ne kan nat clymben / ouer so heigh a style
Yet seye I this / þat as to commune entente
Thus muche amounteth / al that euere he mente

If it so be / þat I haue it in my mynde
¶ He seyde / the kyng of Arabe / and of Inde
My lige lord / on this solempne day
Salueth yow / as he best kan and may
And sendeth yow / in honour of youre feste
By me / that am al redy / at youre heste
This Steede of bras / that esily and weel
Kan in the space / of o day naturel
This is to seyn / in .xxiiij. houres
Wher so yow list/ in droghte / or ellis shoures
Beren youre body / in to euery place
To which youre herte / wilneth for to pace
With outen wem of yow / thurgh foul or fair
Or if yow list to flee as hye in the Ayr
As dooth an Egle / whan hym list to soore
This same Steede / shal bere yow eu*er*e moore
[With[1]] outen harm / til ye be ther yow leste [1 *Rats.* If 130, bk]
[1Th]ough þat ye slepen / on his bak / or reste
And turne agayn / with writhyng of a pyn
He þat it wroghte / koude many a gyn
He wayted / many a constellacioñ
Er he hadde doon / this op*er*acioñ
And knew ful many a seel / and many a bond
¶ This Mirour eek/ that I haue in myn hond
Hath swich a myght þat men may in it see
Whan ther shal fallen / any adu*er*sitee
Vn to youre regne / or to your sel also
And openly / who is youre freend / or fo
¶ And ouer al this / if any lady bright
Hath set hir herte / on any maner wight
If he be fals / she shal his trayson see
His newe loue / and al his subtiltee
So openly / þat ther shal no thyng hyde
Wher fore / agayn this lusty Som*er*es tyde
This Mirour and this ryng/ þat ye may see
He hath sent to my lady Canacee

Youre excellente doghter/ þat is heere (hic)
¶ The vertu of the ryng' if ye wol heere (audire)
Is this / þat if hir list it for to were
Vp on hir thombe / or in hir purs it bere
Ther nys no fowel / þat fleeth vnder the heuene
That she ne shal wel / vnderstonde his steuene
And knowe his menyng' openly and pleyn
And answere hym / in his langage ageyn
And euery gras / þat groweth vp on roote
She shal eek knowe / and whom it wol doon boote
Al be his woundes / neuer so depe and wyde
¶ This naked swerd / þat hangeth by my syde
Swich vertu hath / þat what man so ye smyte
Thurgh out his armure / it wol kerue and byte
Were it as thikke / as is a braunched ook'
And what man / þat is wounded with the Strook'
Shal neuere be hool / til þat yow lust of grace
To stroke hym with the platte / in thilke place
Ther he is hurt' this is as muche to seyn
Ye moote / with the platte swerd ageyn
Stroke hym in the wounde / and it wol close [leaf 131]
This is a verray sooth / with outen glose
It failleth nat' / whiles it is in youre hold
And whan this knyght' hath thus his tale ytold
He rideth out of halle / and doun he lighte
¶ His Steede which þat shoon / as sonne brighte
Stant in the Court' stille as any stoon
This knyght' is to his chambre lad anon
And is vnarmed / and to mete yset'
The presentz / been ful realliche yfet'
This is to seyn / the swerd and the Mirour
And born anon / in to the heighe tour
With certein Officers / ordeyned ther fore
And vn to Canacee / the ryng is bore
Solempnely / ther she sit' at the table
But sikerly / with outen any fable

The hors of bras / þat may nat been remewed
It stant' as it were / to the ground yglewed
Ther may no man / out of the place it dryue
ffor noon engyn / of wyndas or polyue
And cause why / for they kan nat the craft'
And ther fore / in the place / they han it laft'
Til þat the knyght' hath taught hem the manere
To voyden hym / as ye shal after heere
¶ Greet was the prees / that swarmeth to and fro
To gauren on this hors / that stondeth so
ffor it so heigh was / and so brood and long'
So wel proporcioned / for to ben strong'
Right as it were / a Steede of lumbardye
Ther-with so horsly / and so quyk of eye
As it a gentil Poyleys courser weere
ffor certes / fro his tayl / vn to his eere
Nature / ne art' ne koude hym nat amende
In no degree / as al the peple wende
¶ But euere moore / hir mooste wonder was
How þat it koude goon / and was of bras
It was a ffairye / as the peple semed
Dyuerse folk/ dyuersely han demed
As many heuedes / as many wittes ther been
They murmured / as dooth a swarm of been
[And[1]] maden skiles / after hir fantasies [[1] *Rats.* leaf 131, back]
Rehersynge / of thise olde Poetries
And seyden / it was lyk the Pegasee .i. equs Pegaseus.
The hors / þat hadde wynges for to flee
Or ellis it was / the Grekys hors Synoñ
That broghte Troye / to destruccioñ
As men / in thise olde gestes rede
¶ Myn herte quod oon / is euere moore in drede
I trowe / som men of armes been ther Inne
That shapen hem / this Citee for to wynne
It were right good / þat al swich thyng were knowe
¶ Another rowned / to his felawe lowe

And seyde he lyeth / for it is rather lyk
An apparence / ymaad by som magyk
As Iogelours pleyen / at thise festes grete
Of sondry doutes / thus they iangle and trete
As lewed peple / demeth comunly
Of thynges / þat been moore maad subtilly
Than they kan / in hir lewednesse comprehende
They demen gladly / to the badder ende
¶ And somme of hem / wondren on the Mirour
That born was vp / vn to the maister tour
How men myghte in it/ swiche thynges se
¶ Another answerde / and seyde it myghte wel be
Naturelly / by composicions /
Of anglis / and of sly reflexions
And seiden / þat in Rome was swich oon
They speke of Alocen / and Vitulon
Of Aristotle / þat writen in hir lyues
Of queynte Mirours / and of perspectyues
As knowen they / þat han hir bookes herd
¶ And oother folk/ han wondred on the swerd
That wolde percen / thurgh out euery thyng
And fille in speche / of Thelophus the kyng
And of Achilles / for his queynte spere
ffor he koude with it/ bothe hecle and dere
Right in swich wise / as men may / with the swerd
Of which right now / ye han your seluen herd
¶ They speeke / of sondry hardyng of metal
And speke of medicynes / ther with al
And how / and whanne / it sholde yharded be [leaf 132]
Which is vnknowe / algates vn to me
¶ Tho speeke they / of Canacees ryng
And seyden alle / þat swich a wonder thyng
Of craft of rynges / herde they neuere non
Saue þat he Moyses / and kyng Salomon
Hadde a name of konnyng in swich art
Thus seyn the peple / and drawen hem a part

¶ But nathelees / somme seyden þat it was
Wonder / to maken of fern asshen glas
And yet is glas / nat lyk asshen of fern
But for they han / knowen it so fern
Therfore / cesseth hir Ianglyng and hir wonder
¶ As soore wondren somme / on cause of thonder
On ebbe and flood / on gossomer / and on myst'
And alle thyng' til þat the cause is wist'
Thus Ianglen they / and demen and deuyse
Til that the kyng' gan fro the bord aryse
¶ Phebus hath laft' the angle Meridional
And yet' ascendyng is / the beest roial
The gentil leon / with his Aldiran
Whan þat this tartre kyng Cambynskan
Roos fro his bord / ther as he sat ful hye
Biforn hym gooth / the loude Mynstralcye
Til he cam / to his chambre of parementz
There as ther sownen / diuerse Instrumentz
That it is lyk' / an heuene for to heere
Now dauncen / lusty Venus children deere
ffor in the fissh̄ / hir lady sat ful hye
And looketh on hem / with a freendly eye
¶ This noble kyng' is set vp on his trone
This straunge knyght' is fet to hym ful soone
And on the daunce he gooth / with Canacee
Here is / the reuel / and the Iolitee
That is nat able / a dul man to deuyse
He moste han knowe / loue and his seruyse
And been a festlich man / as fressh̄ as May
That sholde yow deuysen / swich array
¶ Who koude telle yow / the forme daunces
So vnkouthe / and swiche fresshe contenaunces
[1Sw]ich subtil lookyng' and dissimulynges [1 *Rats.* leaf 132, back]
ffor drede / of Ialous mennes aperceyuynges
No man but launcelot' and he is deed
Ther fore I passe / of al this lustiheed

I sey namoore / but in this Iolynesse
I lete hem / til men / to the souper dresse
¶ The Styward / byt Spices for to hye
And eek the wyn / in al this melodye
The vsshers / and the Squyers / been ygon
The Spices and the wyn / is come anon
They ete and drynke / and whan this hadde an ende
Vn to the temple / as reson was they wende
¶ The seruyce doon / they soupen al by day
What nedeth yow / rehercen hir array
Ech man woot wel / þat at a kynges feste
Hath plentee / to the meeste / and to the leeste
And deyntees / mo than been in my knowyng
At after souper / gooth this noble kyng
To seen this hors of bras / with al a route
Of lordes / and of ladyes / hym aboute
¶ Swich wondryng was ther / on this hors of bras
That syn the grete sege / of Troye was
Ther as men wondreden / on an hors also
Ne was ther / swich a wondryng as was tho
But finally / the kyng axeth this knyght
The vertu of this Courser / and the myght
And preyed hym / to telle his gouernaunce
¶ This hors anon / gan for to trippe and daunce
Whan þat this knyght leyde hand vp on his reyne
And seyde sire / ther nys namoore to seyne
But whan yow list to ryden any where
Ye moten trille a pyn / stant in his ere
Which I shal yow telle / bitwixe vs two
Ye mote nempne hym / to what place also
Or to what contree / þat yow list to ryde
And whan ye come / ther as yow list abyde
Byd hym descende / and tryl another pyn
ffor ther Inne lyth / theffect of al the gyn
And he wol doun descende / and doon youre wille
And in that place / he wol abiden stille

Theigh al the world / the contrarie hadde yswore [leaf 133]
He shal nat thennes / be y-drawe nor ybore
Or if yow list' / bidde hym thennes gon
Trille this pyn / and he wol vanysshe anon
Out of the sighte / of euery maner wight'
And come agayn / be it day or nyght'
Whan þat yow list' to clepen hym ageyn
In swich a gyse / as I shal to yow seyn
Bitwixen yow and me / and that ful soone
Ryd whan yow lust' ther is namoore to doone
¶ Enformed / whan the kyng was of that knyght'
And hath conceyued / in his wit aright'
The manere / and the forme / of al this thyng'
fful glad and blythe / this noble doghty kyng'
Repeireth to his reuel / as biforn
The brydel is / vn to the tour yborn
And kept among' his Iewels / lief and deere
The hors vanysshed / I noot in which manere
Out of hir sighte / ye gete namoore for me
But thus I lete / in lust and Iolitee
This Cambynskan / his lordes festeyynge
Til wel neigh / the day bigan to sprynge

¶ Explicit prima pars ☙

¶ Incipit' pars secunda ☙

The norice of digestion / the sleepe
Gan on hem wynke / and bad hem take keepe
That muche drynke and labour / wol haue reste
And with a galpyng mouth / hem alle he keste
And seyde / that it was tyme / to lye adoun
ffor blood / was in his domynacioun
Cherisseth blood / natures freend quod he
They thanken hym galpynge / by two / by thre
And euery wight' gan drawe hym to his reste
As sleepe hem bad / they take it for the beste

¶ Hir dremes / shul nat now be toold for me
fful were hir heuedes / of fumositee
[1That cau]seth dreem / of which ther nys no charge [1 *Rats.* leaf 133, bk]
[1The]y slepen / til that it was pryme large
The mooste part' but it were Canacee
She was ful mesurable / as wommen be
ffor of hir fader / hadde she take leue
To goon to reste / soone after it was eue
Hir liste nat' apalled for to be
Nor on the morwe / vnfestlich for to se
And slepte hir firste sleep / and awook'
ffor swich a ioye / she in her herte took'
Bothe of hir queynte ryng' and hir Mirour
That .xx. tyme / she chaunged hir colour
And in hir sleepe / right for impressiõn
Of hir Mirour / she hadde a visiõn
Wher fore / er þat the sonne gan vp glyde
She clepyd / vp on hir maistresse / hir bisyde
And seyde / þat hir liste for to ryse
¶ Thise olde wommen / þat been gladly wyse
As is hir maystresse / answerde hir anon
And seyde / madame / whider wolde ye gon
Thus erly / for the folk been alle on reste
¶ I wol quod she aryse / for me leste
No lenger for to slepe / and walke aboute
Hir maistresse / clepith wommen / a gret route
And vp they risen / wel an .x. or .xij.e
Vp riseth / fresshe Canacee hir selue
As rody and bright' as dooth the yonge sonne
That in the ram / is .4. degrees vp ronne
Noon hyere was he / whan she redy was
And forth she walketh / esily a pas
Arrayed / after the lusty seson soote
Lightly for to pleye / and walke on foote
Nat but with .v. or .vj. of hir meynee
And in a trench / forth in the park' goth she

¶ The vapour / which þat fro the erthe glood
Made the sonne / to seme rody and brood
But nathelees / it was so fair a sighte
That it made / al hir hertes for to lighte
What for the seson / and the morwenynge
And for the fowles / that she herde synge
ffor right anon / she wiste what they mente [leaf 134]
Right by hir song' and knew al hir entente
¶ The knotte / why / that eu*e*ry tale is told
If it be taryed / til þat' lust' be cold
Of hem / þat han it after herkned yoore
The sauour passeth / euer lenger the moore
ffor fulsomnesse / of his p*ro*lixitee
And by this same reson / thynketh me
I scholde / to the knotte condescende
And maken of hir walkyng' soone an ende
¶ Amydde a tree / for drye as whit as chalk/
As Canacee / was pleyynge in hir walk'
Ther sat a ffawkon / ouer hir heed ful hye
And with a pitous voys / so gan to crye
That al the wode / resowned of hir cry
ybeten hadde she hir self / so pitously
with bothe hir wynges / til the rede blood
Ran endelong the tree / ther as she stood
And eu*e*re in oon / she cryde alwey and shrighte
And with hir beek' hir seluen so she prighte
That ther nys tygre / ne so cruel beest'
That dwelleth / outher in wode / or in fforest'
That nolde han wept' / if þat he wepe koude
ffor sorwe of hire / she shrighte alwey so loude
¶ ffor ther nas neuere man / yet on lyue
If þat I koude / a ffaukon wel discryue
That herde of swich another / of fairnesse
As wel of plumage / as of gentillesse
Of shape / of al that myghte yrekened be
A ffaukon p*e*regryn / thanne semed she

Of fremde land / and eu*er*e moore as she stood
She swowned now and now / for lakke of blood·
Til wel neigh / is she fallen / fro that tree
¶ This faire kynges doghter Canacee
That on hir fynger / baar the queynte ryng·
Thurgh which / she vnderstood wel euery thyng·
That any fowl / may in his ledne sayn
And koude answere hym / in his ledne agayn
Hath vnderstonden / what this ffaukon seyde
And wel neigh for the routhe / almoost· she deyde
[·1 And t]o the tree / she goth ful hastily [·1 *Rats.* leaf 134, back]
[·1 A]nd on this ffaukon / looketh pitously
And heeld hir lappe abrood / for wel she wiste
The ffaukon / moste fallen fro the twiste
Whan *þat* it swowneth next· for lakke of blood
A long while / to wayten hir she stood
Til at the laste / she spak / in this manere
Vn to the hauk· / as ye shal after heere
¶ What is the cause / if it be for to telle
That ye been / in this furial pyne of helle
Quod Canacee / vn to this hauk aboue
Is this for sorwe of deeth / or los of loue
ffor as I trowe / thise been causes two
That causen moost/ a gentil herte wo
Of oother harm / it nedeth nat to speke
ffor ye your self· / vp on yow self yow wreke
Which proeueth wel / *þat* outher Ire or drede
Moot been encheson / of youre cruel dede
Syn *þat* I se / noon oother wight yow chace
ffor loue of god / as dooth your seluen g*r*ace
Or what may been youre help / for west nor Est·
Ne saw I neuere er now / no bryd ne beest·
That ferde / with hym self so pitously
Ye sleen me / with youre sorwe v*er*raily
I haue of yow / so greet compassioun
ffor goddes loue / com fro the tree adoun

And as I am / a kynges doghter trewe
If þat I verraily / the cause knewe
Of youre disese / if it laye in my myght
I wolde amende it er that it were nyght
As wisly help me / grete god of kynde
And herbes / shal I right ynowe fynde
To heele with / youre hurtes hastily
¶ Tho shrighte this ffaukon / yet moore pitously
Than euer she dide / and fil to ground anon
And lyth aswowne deed / and lik a ston
Til Canacee / hath in hir lappe hir take
Vn to that tyme / she gan of swowne awake
And aftere / that she of swow / gan abreyde
Right in hir haukes ledne / thus she seyde
That pitee renneth soone / in gentil herte [leaf 135]
ffeelynge his similitude / in peynes smerte
Is proued al day / as men may it see
As wel by werk/ as by auctoritee
ffor gentil herte / kitheth gentilesse
I se wel / þat ye han of my distresse
Compassion / my faire Canacee
Of verray / wommanly benygnitee
That nature / in youre principles hath set/
But for noon hope / for to fare the bet
But for to obeye / vn to youre herte free
And for to maken othere / ywar by me
As by the whelpe / chasted is the leon
Right for that cause / and for that conclusioñ
Whil þat I haue / a leyser and a space
Myn harm / I wol confessen / er I pace
And euere / whil þat oon / hir sorwe tolde
That oother weep / as she to water wolde
Til þat the ffaukon / bad hir to be stille
And with a syk/ right thus she seyde hir wille
¶ Ther I was bred / allas that ilke day
And fostred in a Rocħ / of Marbul gray

So tendrely / þat no thyng eyled me
I nyste nat what was aduersitee
Til I koude fle / ful hye vnder the sky
Tho dwelte a tercelet me faste by
That semed welle / of alle gentillesse
Al were he ful / of trayson and falsnesse
If was so wrapped / vnder humble cheere
And vnder hewe of trouthe / in swich manere
Vnder plesaunce / and vnder bisy peyne
That no wight wolde han wend / he koude feyne
So depe in greyn / he dyed his colours
Right as a serpent hit hym vnder floures
Til he may se his tyme / for to byte
Right so / this god of loues ypocrite
Dooth so his cerymonijs / and obeysañces
And kepeth in semblant alle hise obseruañces
That sownen / in to gentilesse of loue
As on a Tombe / is al the faire aboue
[An]d vnder is the cors / swich as ye woot [Rats. leaf 135, back]
Swich was this ypocrite / bothe cold and hoot
And in this wise / he serued his entente
That saue the feend / noon wiste what he mente
Til he so longe / hadde wopen and compleyned
A many a yeer / his seruice to me feyned
Til that myn herte / to pitous and to nyce
Al Innocent of his crowned malice
ffor-fered of his deeth / as thoughte me
Vp on his othes / and his seuretee
Graunted hym loue / vp on this condicioun
That euere mo / myn honour and renoun
Were saued / bothe pryuee and apert
That is to seyn / that after his desert
I yaf hym al myn herte / and my thoght
God woot and he / þat oother wise noght
And took his herte / in chaunge of myn for ay
But sooth is seyd / goon sithen many a day

A trewe wight and a theef / thynketh nat oon
¶ And whanne he saw the thyng' so fer ygon
That I hadde graunted hym fully my loue
In swich a gise / as I haue seyd aboue
And yeuen hym / my trewe herte as fre
As he swoor / he yaf his herte to me
Anoon this tygre / ful of doublenesse
ffil on his knees / with so deuout humblesse
With so heigh reuerence / and as by his cheere
So lyk a gentil louere / of manere
So rauysshed / as it semed for the ioye
That neuere Iason / ne Parys of Troye
Iason certes / ne noon oother man
Syn Lameth was / þat alderfirst bigan
To louen two / as writen folk biforn
Ne neuere / syn / the firste man was born
Ne koude man / by twenty thousand part'
Countrefete / the Sophymes of his art'
Ne were worthy / vnbokele his galoche
Ther doublenesse / or feynyng sholde approche
Ne so koude thanke a wight' as he did me
His manere / was an heuene for to see
Til any womman / were she neuer so wys [leaf 136]
So peynted he / and kembde at poynt deuys
As wel his wordes / as his contenaunce
And I so loued hym / for his obeisaunce
And for the trouthe / I demed in his herte
That if so weere / that any thyng hym smerte
Al were it neuer so litel / and I it wiste
Me thoughte / I felte deeth myn herte twiste
And shortly / so ferforth this thyng is went'
That my wyl / was his willes Instrument'
This is to seyn / my wyl obeyed his wil
In alle thyng' as fer as reson fil
Kepynge the boundes / of my worship euere
Ne neuere hadde I thyng' so lief ne leuere

As hym god woot' ne neuere shal namo
¶ This laste lenger / than a yeer / or two
That I supposed of hym nat but good
But finally / thus a the laste it stood
That ffortune wolde / þat he moste twynne
Out of that place / which þat I was Inne
Wher me was wo / that is no questiõ
I kan nat make of it descripsiõ
ffor o thyng' dar I tellen boldely
I knowe what is / the peyne of deeth ther by
Swich harm I felte / for he ne myghte bileue
So on a day / of me he took his leue
So sorwefully eek/ that I wende verraily
That he hadde feelyd / as muche harm as I
Whan that I herde hym speke / and saw his hewe
But nathelees / I thoughte he was so trewe
And eek/ that he repeyre sholde agayn
With Inne a litel while / sooth to sayn
And reson wolde eek' þat he moste go
ffor his honour / as ofte happeth so
That I made / vertu of necessitee
And took it wel / syn þat it moste be
As I best myghte / I hidde from hym my sorwe
And took hym by the hand / Seint Iohn to borwe
And seyde thus / lo I am youres al
Beeth swich / as I to yow haue been and shal
[What he[1]] answerde / it nedeth nat reherse [1 *Rats.* If 136, bk]
[Who[1]] kan seyn bet than he / who kan doon werse
[1 W]han he hath al wel seyd / thanne hath he doon
Ther fore bihoued hire / a ful long spoon
That shal ete with a feend / thus herde I seye
So at the laste / he moste forth his weye
And forth he fleeth / til he cam ther hym leste
¶ Whan it' cam hym / to purpos for to reste
I trowe he hadde / thilke text in mynde
That alle thing' repeiryng to his kynde ¶ reditu suo singula gaudent'.

Gladeth hym self / thus seyn men as I gesse
Men louen of *pro*pre kynde / Newfangelnesse
As bryddes doon / that men in Cages feede
ffor theigh thow / nyght and day / take of hem hede
And strawe hir Cages / faire / and softe as sylk/
And yeue hem sugre / hony / breed / and Milk
Yet right anon / as þat his dore is vppe
He with his feet wol sporne doun his cuppe
And to the wode he wole / and wormes ete
So newfangel / been they of hir mete
And louen nonelries / of *pro*pre kynde
No gentilesse of blood / may hem bynde
¶ So ferde this gentil tercelet allas the day
Thogh he were gentil born / and fressh and gay
And goodlich for to seen / and humble and free
He saw vp on a tyme / a kyte flee
And sodeynly / he loued this kyte so
That al his loue / is clene fro me ago
And hath his trouthe / falsed in this wise
Thus hath the kyte / my loue in hir seruyse
And I am lorn / with outen remedye
And with that word / this ffaukon gan to crye
And swowned eft/ in Canacees barm
¶ Greet was the sorwe / for the haukes harm
That Canacee / and alle hir wommen made
They nyste / how þat they myghte the ffaukon glade
But Canacee / hom bereth hire / in hir lappe
And softely / in plastres gan hir wrappe
Ther as she with hir beek/ hadde hurt hir selue
¶ Now kan nat Canacee / but herbes delue
Out of the grownd / and maken Saues newe [leaf 137]
Of herbes *pre*ciouse / and fyn of hewe
To heelen with this hauk / fro day to nyght
She dooth hir bisynesse / and al hir myght
And by hir beddes heed / she made a Muwe
And couered it / with veluettes blue

In signe of trouthe / that is in wommen sene
And al with oute / the Muwe is peynted grene
In which were peynted / alle thise false fowles
As been thise tydyues / terceletz / and Owles
Right for despit' were peynted hem bisyde
And Pyes / on hem / for to crye / and chyde
¶ Thus lete I Canacee / hir hauk kepyng'
I wol namoore as now / speke of hir ryng'
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
How that this ffaukon / gat hir loue ageyn
Repentant / as the storie telleth vs
By mediacion / of Cambalus
The kynges sone / of which I to yow tolde
But hennes forth I wol my proces holde
To speke of auentures / and of batailles
That neuere yet was herd / so greet meruailles
¶ ffirst wol I telle yow / of Cambynskan
That in his tyme / many a Citee wan
¶ And after / wol I speke / of Algarsyf'
How that he wan / Theodora to his wyf
ffor whom ful ofte / in gret peril he was
Ne hadde he been holpen / by the Steede of bras
¶ And after / wol I speke of Cambalo
That faught in lystes / with the bretheren two
ffor Canacee / er that he myghte hir wynne
And ther I lefte / I wol ayein bigynne

¶ Explicit' secunda pars ☙

[1Inci]pit' tercia pars ☙ [1 *Head-line.* leaf 137, back]

Appollo whirleth vp / his Char so hye
Til that / the god Mercuries hous the slye

¶ The prologe / of the Marchantes tale ☙ [leaf 137, back]

IN feith squyer/ thow hast thee wel yquyt
And gentilly / I preise wel thy wit
Quod the Marchant considerynge thy youthe
So feelyngly thow spekest sire I allowthe
As to my doom / ther is noon þat is heere
Of eloquence / þat shal be thy peere
If þat thow lyue / god yeue thee good chaunce
And in vertu / sende thee continuaunce
ffor of thy speche / I haue gret deyntee
I haue a sone / and by the Trinitee
I hadde leuere / than .xx.ti pound worth lond
Thogh it right now ./ were fallen in myn hond
He were a man / of swich discrecioñ
As þat ye ben / fy on possessioñ
But if a man / be vertuous with al
I haue my sone snybbed / and yit shal
ffor he to vertu / lusteth nat entende
But for to pleye at dees / and to despende
And lese al that he hath / is his vsage
And he hath leuere / talken with a page
Than to commune / with any gentil wight
Where he myghte lerne / gentillesse aright
¶ Straw for youre gentillesse / quod oure hoost
What Marchañt / pardee sire wel thow woost
That ech of yow / moot tellen atte leeste
A tale / or two / or breken his biheste
¶ That knowe I wel sire / quod the Marchant certeyn
I prey yow / haueth me nat in desdeyn

Thogh to this man / I speke a word or two
¶ Telle on thy tale / with outen wordes mo
¶ Gladly sire hoost quod he / I wol obeye
Vn to youre wyl / now herkneth what I seye
I wole yow nat contrarien / in no wise
As fer / as þat my wittes wole suffise
I prey to god / that it may plesen yow
Thanne woot I wel / that it is good ynow

Explicit

[*For the Latin side-notes to the Merchant's Tale, see p.* 350 *at the end of the Tale.*]

¶ Here bigynneth / the Marchantes tale. [leaf 138]

Whilom / ther was dwellynge in Lumbardye
A worthy knyght / that born was of Pauye
In which he lyuede / in greet prosperitee
And .lx. yeer / a wiflees man was he
And folwed ay / his bodily delit
On wommen / ther as was his appetit
As doon thise fooles / that been seculer
And whan that he / was passed .lx. yeer
Were it for holynesse / or for dotage
I kan nat seye / but swich a greet corage
Hadde this knyght to been a wedded man
That day and nyght / he dooth al that he kan
Tespien / where he myghte wedded be
Preyynge oure lord / to graunten hym / þat he
Mighte ones knowe / of thilke blisful lyf
That is / bitwix an housbonde and his wyf
And for to lyue / vnder that holy bond
With which / þat god / man and womman boond
Noon oother lyf seyde he / is worth a bene
ffor wedlok is so esy / and so clene
That in this world / it is a Paradys
Thus seyde this olde knyght þat was so wys
¶ And certeynly / as sooth as god is kyng
To take a wyf / it is a glorious thyng
And namely / whan a man is old and hoor
Thanne is a wyf / the fruyt of his tresor
Thanne sholde he take/ a yong wyf and a feir
On which he myghte / engendren hym an heir

And lede his lyf in ioye / and in solas
Wher/ as thise Bachilers / synge allas
Whan þat they fynde / any aduersitee
In loue / which nys but childissh vanytee
And trewely / it sit wel to be so
That Bachilers / haue ofte peyne and wo
On brotil ground they bilde / and brotilnesse
They fynde / whan they wene sikernesse
[They ly[1]]ue / but as bryd / or as a beest [[1] *Rats.* leaf 138, back]
[In l[1]]ibertee / and vnder noon arest
[T[1]]her as a wedded man / in his estat
Lyueth a lyf / blisful and ordynat
Vnder this yok of mariage ybounde
Wel may his herte / in ioye and blisse habounde
ffor who kan be / so buxom as a wyf
Who is so trewe / and eek so ententyf
To kepe hym syk and kool / as is his make
ffor wele or wo / she wol hym nat forsake
She nys nat wery / hym to loue / and serue
Thogh þat he ly bedrede / til he sterue
And yet som clerkes seyn / it is nat so
Of whiche / he Theofraste / is oon of tho
What force / thogh Theofraste liste lye
¶ Ne tak no wyf quod he / for housbondrye
As for to spare / in houshold thy dispence
A trewe seruant dooth moore diligence
Thy good to kepe / than thyn owene wyf
ffor she wol clayme / half part al hir lyf
And if thow be syk / so god me saue
Thy verray freendes / or a trewe knaue
Wol kepe thee bet than she / that wayteth ay
After thy good / and hath do many a day
And if thow take a wyf / [1] she wole destroye [[1.1] *Written in a rather later ink and hand.*]
Thy good substance / and thy body annoye [1] [? *spurious*]
¶ This sentence / and an hundred thynges worse
Writeth this man / ther god his bones curse

But tak no kepe / of al swich vanytee
Diffye Theofraste / and herke me
¶ A wyf is goddes yifte verraily [*Latin note*, p. 477]
Alle othere manere yiftes hardily 1312
As londes / rentes / pasture / or comune
Or moebles / alle been yiftes of fortune
That passen / as a shadwe vp on the wal
But dreed nat if pleynly speke I shal 1316
A wyf wol laste / and in thyn hous endure
Wel lenger than thee lyst *per*auenture
¶ Mariage / is a ful greet sacrament
He / which *þat* hath no wyf I holde hym shent 1320
He lyueth helplees / and al desolat [leaf 139]
I speke of folk / in seculer estat
¶ And herke why / I sey nat this for noght
That womman is / for mannes help*e* ywroght 1324
The hye god / whan he hadde Adam maked
And seigh hym allone / bely naked
God of his grete goodnesse seyde than [*Latin note*, p. 477]
Lat vs now make an help / vn-to this man 1328
Lyk to hym self and thanne he made hym Eue
Here may ye see / and here may ye preeue
That wyf is mannes help*e* / and his confort
His Paradys terrestre / and his disport 1332
So buxom / and so v*er*tuous is she
They moste nedes lyue in vnytee
O flessh̄ they been / and o flessh as I gesse } nota [*Latin note*, p. 477]
Hath but oon herte / in wele and in distresse }
¶ A wyf / a Seinte Marie benedicitee
How myghte a man / han any adu*er*sitee
That hath a wyf / certes I kan nat seye
The blisse / which *þat* is bitwix hem tweye 1340
Ther may no tonge telle / or herte thynke
If he be poure / she helpeth hym to swynke
She kepeth his good / and wasteth neuer a del
Al that hir housbonde lust hir liketh wel 1344

She seith nat ones nay / whan he seith yee
Do this seith he / al redy sire seith she
¶ O blisful ordre / o wedlok precious
Thou art so murye / and eek so vertuous
And so commended / and approued eek
That any man / that halt hym worth a leek
Vp on his bare knees / oghte al his lyf
Thanken his god / that hym hath sent a wyf
Or ellis preye to god / hym for to sende
A wyf / to laste vn to his lyues ende
ffor thanne his lyf / is set in sikernesse
He may nat be / deceyued / as I gesse
So that he werke / after his wyues reed
Thanne may he boldely / kepen vp his heed
They been so trewe / and ther with al so wyse
ffor which / if thow wolt werken as the wyse
[Do al[1]]wey so / as wommen wol thee rede [1 *Rate.* If 139, bk]
[L[1]]o how that Iacob / as thise clerkes rede [*Latin note*, p. 477]
By good conseil / of his moder Rebekke
Boond the kydes skyn / aboute his nekke
ffor which / his fadres benyson he wan
¶ Lo Iudith / as the storie eek telle kan
By good conseil / she goddes peple kepte
And slow hym Olofernus / whil he slepte [*Latin note*, p. 477]
¶ Lo Abigayl / by good conseil / how she [*Latin note*, p. 477]
Saued hir housbonde Nabal / whan þat he
Sholde han ben slayn / and looke Ester also [*Latin note*, p. 477]
By good conseil / delyuered out of wo
The peple of god / and made hym Mardochee
Of Assuere / enhaunced for to be
¶ Ther nys no thyng in gree superlatyf
As seith Senec / aboue an humble wyf [*Latin note*, p. 477]
¶ Suffre thy wyues tonge / as Caton byt
She shal comaunde / and thow shalt suffren it / [*Latin note*, p. 477]
And yet she wol obeye of curteisye
¶ A wyf / is kepere of thyn housbondrye

Wel may the sike man / biwaille and wepe
Ther as ther is no wyf/ the hous to kepe
I warne thee / if wisly thow wolt wirche [*Latin note*, p. 477]
Loue wel thy wyf/ as Crist loued his chirche [*Latin note*, p. 477]
If thow louest thy self / thow louest thy wif 1385
No man hateth his flessh̄ / but in his lyf/
He fostreth it' and ther-fore bidde I thee
Cherisse thy wyf' or thow shalt neuere thee 1388
Housbonde and wyf' what so men Iaye or pleye
Of worldly folk/ holden the siker weye
They been so knyt' / ther may noon harm bityde
And namely / vp on the wyues syde 1392
ffor which this Ianuarie / of whom I tolde
Considered hath / inwith his dayes olde
The lusty lyf / the vertuous quyete
That is in mariage / hony swete 1396
And for his freendes / on a day he sente
To tellen hem / theffect of his entente
¶ With face sad / this tale he hath hem told
He seyde freendes / I am hoor and old 1400
And almoost god woot' on my pittes brynke [leaf 140]
Vp on my soule / som what moste I thynke
I haue my body / folily despended
Blissed be god / þat it shal been amended 1404
ffor I wol be certeyn / a wedded man
And that anon / in al the haste I kan
Vn to som mayde / fair and tendre of age
I pray yow / shapeth for my mariage 1408
Al sodeynly / for I wol nat abyde
And I wol fonde / tespien on my side
To whom I may / be wedded hastily
But for as muche / as ye been mo than I. 1412
Ye shullen rather / swich a thing espien
Than .I / and where me beste were to allien
¶ But o thyng warne I yow / my freendes deere
I wol noon old wyf han / in no manere 1416

She shal nat passe / .xx. yer certeyn
Old fissh̄ / and yong flessh̄ / wol I haue feyn
Bet is quod he / a Pyk / than a Pykerel
And bet than old boef / is the tendre vel
I wol no womman / xxx^ti. yeer of age
It is but bene straw / and greet forage
And eek thise olde widwes / god it woot
They konne so muche craft on Wades boot
So muchel broken harm / whan hem leste
That with hem / sholde I neuere lyue in reste
ffor sondry scoles / maketh subtile clerkis
Womman of many scoles / half a clerk is
But certeinly / a yong thyng may men gye
Right as men may warm wex / with handes plye
Wherfore / I sey yow pleynly in a clause
I wol noon old wyf han / right for this cause
ffor if so were / I hadde swich meschaunce
That I in hire / ne koude han no plesaunce
Thanne sholde I lede my lyf / in avoutrye
And go streight to the deuel / whan I dye
Ne children sholde I none / vp on hir geten
Yet were me leuere / houndes hadde me eten
Than that myn heritage sholde falle
In straunge hand / and this I telle yow alle
[1I d]ote nat/ I woot the cause why [1 *Rats.* leaf 140, back]
Men sholde wedde / and ferther moore woot I
Ther speketh many a man of mariage
That woot namoore of it/ than woot my page
ffor whiche causes / man sholde take a wyf
If he ne may nat lyue / chast his lyf
Take hym a wyf/ with greet deuocioñ
By cause / of leueful procreacioñ
Of children / to thonour of god aboue
And nat oonly / for paramour or loue
And for they sholde / lecherye eschue
And yelde hir dette / whan þat it is due

Or for þat ech of hem / sholde helpen oother
In meschief as a Suster shal the brother
And lyue in chastitee / ful holily
But sires by youre leue / that am nat I
ffor god be thanked / I dar make auant
I feele my lymes / stark and suffisant
To do / al that a man bilongeth to
I woot my self best what I may do
¶ Thogh I be hoor / I fare as dooth a tree ¶ *Nota*
That blosmeth / er the fruyt ywoxen be
And blosmy tree / nys neither drye ne deed
I feele me nowher hoor / but on myn heed
Myn herte / and alle my lymes / been as grene
As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene
And syn þat ye han herd / al myn entente
I pray yow / to my conseil ye wol assente
¶ Dyuerse men / diuersely hym tolde
Of mariage / manye ensamples olde
Somme blamed it somme preised it certeyn
But at the laste / shortly for to seyn
As alday / falleth altercacion
Bitwixe freendes / in disputison
Ther fil a stryf bitwix his bretheren two
Of whiche / that oon was clepid Placebo
Iustinus soothly / called was that oother
¶ Placebo seyde / o Ianuarie brother
fful litel nede / hadde ye my lord so deere
Conseil to axe / of any that is heere
But þat ye been / so ful of Sapience [leaf 141]
That yow ne liketh / for youre heigh prudence
To weyuen / fro the word of Salomon
This word seyde he / vn to vs euerichon
Werk alle thyng by conseil / thus seyde he
And thanne shaltow nat repenten thee
But thogh þat Salamon / spak swich a word
Myn owene deere brother / and my lord

So wisly / god my soule brynge at reste
I holde / your owene conseil is the beste
ffor brother myn / of me tak this motyf
I haue now been / a Court man al my lyf
And god it woot thogh I vnworthy be
I haue stonden / in ful greet degree
Abouten lordes / in ful greet estat
Yet hadde I neuere / with noon of hem debat
I neuere hem contraryed / trewely
I woot wel / þat my lord kan moore than I
What that he seith / I holde it ferm and stable
I seye the same / or ellis thyng semblable
A ful greet fool / is any conseillour
That serueth any lord / of heigh honour
That dar presume / or ellis thenken it
That his conseil / sholde passe his lordes wit
Nay / lordes be no fooles by my fay
Ye han your seluen / shewed heer to day
So heigh sentence / so holily and weel
That I consente / and conferme euery deel
Youre wordes alle / and youre opynyoun
By god / ther nys no man in al this toun
Ne in Ytaille / koude bet han ysayd
Crist halt hym of this conseil / ful wel apayd
And trewely / it is an heigh corage
Of any man / that stapen is an age
To take a yong wyf / by my fader kyn
Youre herte hangeth / on a iolyf pyn
Dooth now in this matere / right as yow leste
ffor fynally / I holde it for the beste
¶ Iustinus / that ay stille sat and herde
Right in this wise / he to Placebo answerde
[No[1]w brother myn / be pacient I preye [[1] *Rats.* leaf 141, back]
[S[1]]yn ye han seyd / and herkneth what I seye
Senec amonges othere wordes wise
Seith / þat a man / oghte hym right wel anyse

To whom / he yeueth his lond / or his catel
And syn I oghte / auysen me right wel
To whom I yeeue my good / away fro me
Wel muchel moore / I oghte auysed be
To whom I yeeue my body / for alwey
I warne yow wel / it is no childes pley
To taken a wyf' withouten auysement'
Men moste enquere / this is myn assent'
Wher she be wys and sobre / or dronkelewe
Or proud/ or ellis oother weys a shrewe
A chidester / or wastour of thy good
Or riche / or poure / or ellis mannyssh wood
Al be it so / þat no man fynden shal
Noon in this world / that trotteth hool in al
Ne man ne beest' swich as men koude deuyse
But nathelees / it oghte ynogh suffise
With any wyf' if so were þat she hadde
Mo goode thewes / than hir vices badde
And al this axeth leyser / for tenquere
ffor god it woot' I haue wept many a teere
fful pryuely / syn þat I hadde a wyf
Preyse who so wole / a wedded mannes lyf
Certeyn I fynde in it' but cost and care
And obseruances / of alle blisses bare
And yet god woot' my neghebores aboute
And namely / of wommen many a route
Seyn þat I haue / the·mooste stedefast wyf
And eek the mekeste / that bereth lyf'
But I woot best' where wryngeth me my sho
Ye mowe for me / right as yow liketh do
Auyseth yow / ye been a man of age
How þat ye entren / in to mariage
And namely / with a yong wyf and a feir
By him þat made water / erthe and Eir
The yongest man / þat is in al this route
Is bisy ynow / to bryngen it aboute

To han his wyf allone / trusteth me [leaf 143]
Ye shul nat plesen hire / fully yeres thre
This is to seyn / to doon hire ful plesance
A wyf axeth / ful many an obseruance 1564
I pray yow / þat ye be nat yuele apayd
¶ Wel quod this Ianuarie / and hastow y-sayd
Straw for thy Senec and for thy prouerbes
I counte nat / a panyer ful of herbes 1568
Of Scole termes / wiser man than thow
As thow hast herd / assenteden right now
To my purpos / Placebo what sey ye
¶ I seye / it is a cursed man quod he 1572
That letteth matrymoigne sikerly
And with that word / they risen sodeynly
And been assented fully / that he sholde
Be wedded whan hym liste / and wher he wolde 1576
¶ Heigh fantasie / and curious bisynesse
ffro day to day / gan in the soule impresse
Of Ianuarie / aboute his mariage
Many fair shape / and many a fair visage 1580
Ther passeth thurgh his herte / nyght by nyght
As who so tooke a Mirour / polisshed bright
And sette it in a commune Market place
Thanne sholde he se / ful many a figure pace 1584
By his Mirour / and in the same wise
Gan Ianuarie / in with his thoght deuyse
Of maydens / whiche þat dwelten hym bisyde
He wiste nat wher þat he myghte abyde 1588
ffor if þat oon / haue beautee in hir face
Another stant so / in the peples grace
ffor hir sadnesse / and hir benygnytee
That of the peple / grettest voys hath she 1592
And somme were riche / and hadden badde name
But natheles / bitwene ernest and game
He atte laste / apoynted hym on oon
And leet alle othere / from his herte goon 1596

And chees hire / of his owene auctoritee
ffor loue is blynd alday / and may nat see
And whan that he / was in his bed ybrought
He purtreyde / in his herte / and in his thought
[Hir[1]] fresshe beautee / and hir age tendre [[1] *Rats.* If 142, bk]
[H[1]]ir myddel smal / hir armes longe and sklendre
Hir wise gouernance / hir gentilesse
Hir wommanly beryng and hir sadnesse
And whan þat he on hire / was condescended
Hym thoughte / his choys myghte nat ben amended
ffor whan þat he hym self / concluded hadde
Hym thoughte / ech oother mannes wit was badde
That impossible / it weere to replye
Agayn his choys / this was his fantasie
¶ His freendes sente he to / at his instance
And preyde hem / to doon hym that plesance
That hastily / they wolden to hym come
He wolde abregge hir labour alle and some
Nedeth namoore / for hym to go ne ryde
He was apointed / ther he wolde abyde
¶ Placebo cam / and eek his freendes soone
And alderfirst he bad hem alle a boone
That noon of hem / none argumentes make
Agayn the purpos / which þat he hath take
Which purpos / was plesant to god seyde he
And verray ground / of his prosperitee
¶ He seyde / ther was a mayden in the toun
Which þat of beautee / hadde greet renoun
Al were it so / she were of smal degree
Suffiseth hym / hir youthe and hir beautee
Which mayde he seyde / he wolde han to his wyf
To lede in ese / and holynesse his lyf
And thanked god / þat he myghte han hire al
That no wight his blisse parten shal
And preyde hem / to labouren in this nede
And shapen / þat he faille nat to spede

ffor thanne he seyde / his Spirit was at ese
Thanne is quod he / no thyng may me displese
Saue o thyng' priketh in my conscience
The which I wol reherce in youre p*r*esence
¶ I haue quod he herd seyd / ful yoore ago
Ther may no man / han p*ar*fite blisses two
This is to seye / in erthe and eek in heuene
ffor thogh he kepe hym / fro the synnes seuene
And eek from euery branche / of thilke tree [leaf 143]
Yet is ther / so p*ar*fit felicitee
And so greet ese / and lust in mariage
That euere I am agast' now in myn age
That I shal lede now / so murye a lyf
So delicat' with outen wo and stryf
That I shal han myn heuene / in erthe heere
ffor sith þat verray heuene / is boght so deere
With tribulacions / and greet penance
How sholde I thanne / that lyue in swich plesance
As alle wedded men / doon with hir wyuys
Come to the blisse / that Crist eterne on lyue is
This is my drede / and ye my bretheren tweye
Assoileth me / this question I preye
¶ Iustinus which þat hated his folye
Answerde anon / right in his iaperye
And for he wolde / his longe tale abregge
He wolde / noon auctoritee allegge
But seide sire / so ther be noon obstacle
Oother than this / god of his hye myracle
And of his mercy / may so for yow werche
That er ye haue / your right' of holy cherche
Ye may repente / of wedded mannes lyf
In which ye seyn / ther is no wo ne stryf
And ellis god forbede / but he sente
A wedded man / hym g*r*ace to repente
Wel ofte / rather than a sengle man
And ther fore sire / the beste reed I kan

Dispeire yow noght' but haue in youre memorie
Paraunter / she may be youre purgatorie
She may be goddes mene / and goddes whippe
Thanne shal your soule / vp to heuene skippe
Swifter / than dooth an arwe / out of a bowe
I hope to god / heer after ye shul knowe
That' ther nys / noon so greet felicitee
In mariage / ne neuere mo shal be
That yow shal lette / of youre saluacioñ
So that ye vse / as skile is and resoñ
The lustes of youre wyf / attemprely
And þat / ye plese hire / nat to amorously
[An[1]]d that ye kepe yow eek/ from oother synne [[1] *Rate.* leaf 143, back]
My tale is doon / for my wit is thynne
Beth nat agast her-of / my brother deere
But lat vs waden / out of this matere
The wyf of Bathe / if ye han vnderstonde
Of mariage / which we han on honde
Declared hath ful wel / in litel space
ffareth now wel / god haue yow in his grace
¶ And with that word / this Iustyn and his brother
Han take hir leue / and ech of hem of oother
ffor whan they sawe / þat it moste nedes be
They wroghten so / by sly / and wys tretee
That she this mayden / which that Mayus highte
As hastily / as euer þat she myghte
Shal wedded be / vn to this Ianuarie
¶ I trowe / it were to longe yow to tarye
If I yow tolde / of euery scrit and bond
By which / þat she was feffed / in his lond
Or for to herknen / of hir riche array
But finally / ycomen is that day
That to the chirche / bothe be they went
ffor to receyue / the holy sacrament
¶ fforth comth the preest' with stoole aboute his nekke
And bad hire be lyk / Sarra and Rebekke

In wisdom / and in trouthe of mariage
And seyde his orisons / as is vsage
And croucheth hem / and bad / god sholde hem blesse
And made al siker ynow / with holynesse
¶ Thus been they wedded / with solempnitee
And at the laste / sitteth he and she
With oother worthy folk/ vp on the deys
Al ful of ioye and blisse / is the paleys
And ful of Instrumentz / and of vitaille
The mooste deynteuous / of al Ytaille
Bi-forn hem stoode swiche Instrumentz of swich soun
That Orpheus / nof Thebes Amphioun
Ne maden neuere / swich a melodye
At euery cours / thanne cam loud mynstralcye
That neuere tromped / Ioab / for to heere
Ne he Theodomas / yet half so cleere
At Thebes / whan the Citee was in doute [leaf 144]
Bacus / the wyn hem shenketh al aboute
And Venus laugheth / vp on euery wight
ffor Ianuarie / was bicome hir knyght
And wolde / bothe assayen his corage
In libertee / and eek in mariage
And with hir firbrond / in hir hand aboute
Daunceth bifore the bryde / and al the route
And certeinly / I dar right wel seye this
Ymeneus / that god of weddyng is
Say neuere his lyf / so murye a wedded man
Hoold thow thy pees / thou Poete Marcian
That writest vs / that ilke weddyng murye
Of hire Philologie / and he Mercurie
And of the songes / that the Muses songe
To smal / is bothe thy penne / and eek thy tonge
ffor to discryuen / of this mariage
Whan tendre youthe / hath wedded stoupyng age
Ther is swich murthe / that it may nat be writen
Assayeth it your self/ than may ye witen

If that I lye or noon / in this matere
¶ Mayus that sit' with so benygne a cheere
Hir to biholde / it semed ffairye
Queene Ester / looked neuere *with* swich an eye
On Assuer / so meke a look hath she
I may yow nat deuyse / al hir beautee
But thus muche / of hir beautee / telle I may
That she was lyk' the brighte morwe of May
ffulfild / of alle beautee and plesaunce
¶ This Ianuarie / is rauysshed in a traunce
At euery tyme / he looked on hir face
But in his herte / he gan hir to manace
That he that nyght' in armes wolde hir streyne
Harder than euere / Parys dide Eleyne
But nathelees / yet hadde he gret pitee
That thilke nyght' offenden hire moste he
And thoghte allas / o tendre creature
Now wolde god / ye myghte wel endure
Al my corage / it is so sharpe and kene
I am agast' ye shul it nat sustene
[ffor'] god forbede / that I dide al my myght' [1 *Rats.* If 144, bk]
Now wolde god / that it were woxen nyght'
And þat the nyght' wolde laste euere mo
I wolde / that al this peple were ago
And fynally / he dooth al his labour
As he best myghte / sauyng his honour
To haste hem fro the mete / in subtil wise
The tyme cam / þat reson was to rise
And after that' men daunce / and drynken faste
And Spices / al aboute the hous they caste
And ful of ioye and blisse / is euery man
Al but a Squyer / highte Damyan
Which carf biforn the knyght' ful many a day
He was so rauysshed / on his lady May
That for the verray peyne / he was ny wood
Almoost he swelte / and swowned as he stood

So sore hath Venus / hurt hym with hir brond
As that she baar it' dauncyng in hir hond
And to his bed / he wente hym hastily
Namoore of hym / at this tyme speke .I
But ther I lete hym / wepe ynow and pleyne
Til fresshe May / wol rewen on his peyne.
¶ O. *per*ilous fyr / that in the bed straw bredeth Auctor
O. famulier foo / that his *ser*uice bedeth
O. *ser*uant traytour / false homly hewe
Lyk to the Neddre in bosom / sly vntrewe
God shilde vs alle / from youre aqueyntance
O Ianuarie / dronken in plesance
In mariage / se how thy Damyan
Thyn owene Squyer / and thy born man
Entendeth / for to do thee vileynye
God grante thee / thyn homly fo espye
ffor in this world / nys worse pestilence
Than homly fo / alday in thy *pre*sence
¶ P*ar*fourned hath the sonne / his Ark' diurne [*Latin note*, p. 477]
No lenger / may the body of hym soiurne
On thorisonte / as in that latitude
Night with his mantel / that is derk and rude
Gan ouersprede / Themysperies aboute
ffor which / depa*r*ted is / this lusty route
ffor Ianuarie / with thank on eue*ry* syde [leaf 145]
Hom to hir houses / lustily they ryde
Wher as they doon hir thynges / as hem leste
And whan they say hir tyme / go to reste
¶ Soone after þat' this hasty Ianuarie
Wol go to bedde / he wol no lenger tarie
He drynketh Ypocras / Clarree and Vernage
Of Spices hoote / tencressen his corage
And many a letuarie / hadde he ful fyn
Swich as the cursed Monk/ daun Constantyn
Hath writen / in his book' De coitu
To eten hem alle / he nas no thyng eschu

And to his pryuee freendes / thus seyde he
ffor goddes loue / as soone as it may be
Lat voyden al this hous / in curteis wise
And they han doon / right as he wol deuyse
Men drynken / and the trauers drawe anon
The bryde was broght a bedde / as stille as stoon
And whan the bed / was with the preest yblessed
Out of the chambre / hath euery wight hym dressed
And Ianuarie / hath faste in armes take
His fresshe May / his Paradys / his make
He lulleth hire / he kisseth hire / ful ofte
With thilke bristles / of his berd vnsofte
Lyk to the Skyn of houndfyssh / sharpe as brere
ffor he was shaue al newe / in his manere
He rubbeth hire / aboute hir tendre face
And seyde thus / allas I moot trespace
To yow my Spouse / and yow gretly offende
Er tyme come / þat I wol doun descende
But natheles / considereth this quod he
Ther nys no werkman / what so euere he be
That may bothe / werke wel and hastily
This wol be doon / at leyser *par*fitly
It is no fors / how longe þat we pleye
In trewe wedlok' coupled be we tweye
And blessed be the yok' / þat we been Inne
ffor in [oure] actes / we mow do no synne
A man / may do no synne with his wyf
Ne hurte hym seluen / with his owene knyf/
[ffor [1]] we han leue / to pleye vs by the lawe [[1] *Rats.* leaf 145, blk]
[1] [T]hus laboureth he / til that the day gan dawe
And thanne / he taketh a sope in fyn Clarree
And vp right in his bed / thanne sitteth he
And after that' he song ful loude and clere
And kiste his wyf / and made wantown cheere
He was al coltyssh / ful of ragerye
And ful of Iargon / as a flekked pye

The slakke skyn / aboute his nekke shaketh
Whil þat he song/ so chaunteth he and craketh
But god woot' what þat may thoghte in hir herte
Whan she hym saw / vp sittyng in his sherte
In his nyght cappe / and with his nekke lene
She preiseth nat' his pleyyng worth a bene
Thanne seyde he thus / my reste wol I take
Now day is come / I may no lenger wake
And doun he leyde his heed / and sleepe til pryme
And afterward / whan þat he saw his tyme
Vp riseth Ianuarie / but fresshe May
Heeld hir chambre / vn to the fourthe day
As vsage is of wyues / for the beste
ffor euery labour / som tyme moot han reste
Or ellis / longe may he nat endure
This is to seyn / no lyues creature
Be it fissh̄ / or bryd / or beest' or man
Now wol I speke / of woful damyan
That langwissheth for loue / as ye shul heere
Ther fore / I speke to hym / in this manere
¶ I seye / o sely Damyan allas
Answere to my demaunde / as in this cas
How shaltow / to thy lady fresshe May
Telle thy wo / she wol alwey sey nay
Eek if thow speke / she wol thy wo biwreye
God be thyn helpe / I kan no bettre seye
This syke damyan / in Venus fyr venus . God of loue./ [*in a later hand.*]
So brenneth / that he dyeth for desyr
ffor which / he putte his lyf in auenture
No lenger myghte he / in this wise endure
But p*r*iuely / a penner gan he borwe
And in a lettre / wroot he al his sorwe
In manere of a compleynt' or a lay [leaf 146]
Vn to his faire / fresshe lady May
And in a purs of sylk' heng on his sherte
He hath it put' and leyd it at his herte

¶ The moone þat at Noon / was thilke day
That Ianuarie / hath wedded fresshe May
In two of Taur / was in to Cancre gliden
So longe hath Mayus / in hir chambre abyden
As custume is / vn to thise nobles alle
A bryde / shal nat eten in the halle
Til dayes foure / or thre dayes atte leeste
Ypassed ben / thanne lat hir go to feste
¶ The fourthe day complet' fro noon to noon
Whan þat the heighe masse / was y-doon
In halle / sit this Ianuarie and May
As fressh̄ / as in the brighte Someres day
And so bifel / how that this goode man
Remembred hym / vp on this Damyan
And seyde / Seynte Marie how may it be
That Damyan / entendeth nat to me
Is he ay syk / or how may this bityde
¶ Hys Squyers / whiche þat stooden ther bisyde
Excused hym / by cause of his siknesse
Which letted hym / to doon his bisynesse
Noon oother cause / myghte make hym tarye
¶ That me forthynketh / quod this Ianuarye
He is a gentil Squyer / by my trouthe
If þat he deyde / it were harm and routhe
He is as wys / discret' and eek secree
As any man / I woot of his degree
And ther-to manly / and eek seruysable
And for to be a thrifty man / right able
But after mete / as soone as euere I may
I wol my self visite hym / and eek May
To do hym / al the confort' þat I kan
And for that word / hym blessed euery man
That of his bountee / and his gentilesse
He wolde so / conforten in siknesse
His Squyer / for it was a gentil dede
¶ Dame quod this Ianuarie / tak good hede

[At af[1]]ter mete / ye with youre wommen alle
[Wh[1]]an ye han ben in chambre / out of this halle [1 *Rats.* If 146, back]
[T[1]]hat alle ye go / to this Damyan
Dooth hym disport he is a gentil man
And telleth hym / þat I wol hym visite
Haue I no thyng but rested me a lite
And spede yow faste / for I wol abide
Til that ye slepe / faste by my syde
And with that word / he gan to hym to calle
A Squier / that was Marchal of his halle
And tolde hym certein thynges / what he wolde
¶ This fresshe May / hath streight hir wey yholde
With alle hir wommen / vn to Damyan
Doun by his beddes syde / sit she than
Confortyng hym / as goodly as she may
¶ This Damyan / whan þat his tyme he say
In secree wise / his purs and eek his bille
In which / þat he ywriten hadde his wille
Hath put in to hir hand / with oute moore
Saue þat he siketh / wonder depe and soore
And softely to hire / right thus seyde he
Mercy / and þat ye nat discouere me
ffor I am deed / if þat this thyng be kyd
This purs hath she / in with hir bosom hyd
And wente hir wey / ye gete namoore of me
But vn to Ianuarie / ycomen is she
That on his beddes syde / sit ful softe
And taketh hire / and kisseth hire ful ofte
And leyde hym doun to slepe / and that anon
She feyned hire / as þat she moste gon
Ther as ye woot that euery wight moot nede
And whan she of this bille / hath taken hede
She rente it al to cloutes / at the laste
And in the pryuee / softely it caste
¶ Who studieth now / but faire fresshe May
Adoun / by olde Ianuarie she lay

That sleepe / til þat the coghe hath hym awaked
Anon he preyde / strepen hire al naked
He wolde of hire he seyde / han som plesañce
He seyde / hir clothes / dide hym encombrance
And she obeyeth / be hir lief or looth [leaf 147]
But lest þat precious folk/ be with me wrooth
How þat he wroghte / I dar nat to yow telle
Or wheithir / it thoughte Paradys / or helle
But heere I lete hem werken / in hir wise
Til euensong rong' and þat they moste arise
Were it by destynee / or by auenture
Were it by Influence / or by nature
Or constellacioñ / that in swich estat'
The heuene stood / that tyme fortunat'
As for to putte a bille / of Venus werkes
ffor alle thyng hath tyme / as seyn thise clerkes
To any womman / for to gete hir loue
I kan nat seye / but grete god aboue
That knoweth / þat noon Act' is causelees
He deme of al / for I wol holde my pees
¶ But sooth is this / how þat this fresshe May
Hath taken / swich impressioñ that day
Of pitee / on this syke Damyan
That from hir herte / she ne dryue kan
The remembrance / for to doon hym ese
Certeyn thoghte she / whom þat this thyng displese
I rekke nat' for here I hym assure
To loue hym best' of any creature
Thogh he namoore hadde / than his sherte
Loo / pitee renneth soone / in gentil herte
¶ Heere may ye se / how excellent franchise
In wommen is / whan they hem narwe auyse
Som tirañt is / as ther be many oon
That hath an herte / as hard as is a stoon
Which wolde / han leten steruen / in the place
Wel rather / than han graunted hym hir grace

And hem reioysen / in hir cruel pryde
And rekke nat' to been an homycide
¶ This gentil May / fulfilled of pitee
Right of hir hand / a lettre maked she
In which she graunteth hym / hir verray grace
Ther lakketh noght oonly / but day and place
Wher that she myghte / vn to his lust suffise
ffor it shal be / right as he wol deuyse
[And [1]] whan she saw hir tyme / vp on a day [1 Rats. If 147, bk]
[To [1]] visite this Damyan / goth May
And subtilly / this lettre doun she threste
Vnder his pilwe / rede it if hym leste
She taketh hym by the hand / and harde hym twiste
So secrely / that no wight of it wiste
And bad hym be al hool / and forth she wente
To Ianuarie / whan þat he for hir sente
¶ Vp riseth Damyan / the nexte morwe
Al passed was / his siknesse and his sorwe
He kembeth hym / he prayneth hym and pyketh
He dooth / al that his lady lust and lyketh
And eek to Ianuarie / he goth as lowe
As euer dide / a dogge for the bowe
He is so plesant' vn to euery man
ffor craft is al / who so þat do it kan
That euery wight' is fayn to speke hym good
And fully / in his ladyes grace he stood
Thus lete I Damyan / aboute his nede
And in my tale / forth I wol procede
¶ Somme clerkes / holden þat felicitee
Stant in delit' and therfore certeyn he
This noble Ianuarie / with al his myght'
In honeste wise / as longeth to a knyght
Shoope hym to lyue / ful deliciously
His housyng' his array / as honestly
To his degree / was maked / as a kynges
Amonges othere / of his honeste thynges

He made a gardyn / walled al with stoon
So fair a gardyn / woot I nowher noon
ffor out of doute / I verraily suppose
That he / þat wroot the Romance of the Rose 2032
Ne koude of it' the beautee wel deuyse
Ne Priapus / ne myghte nat suffise
Thogh he be god of gardyns / for to telle
The beautee / of the gardyn and the welle 2036
That stood vnder a laurer / alwey grene
fful ofte tyme / he Pluto and his queene
Proserpina / and al hir ffairye
Disporten hem / and maken melodye 2040
Aboute that welle / and daunced as men tolde [leaf 148]
This noble knyght' this Ianuarie the olde
Swich deyntee hath / in it to walke and pleye
That he wol no wight' suffre bere the keye 2044
Saue he hym self' for of the smal wyket'
He bar alwey / of siluer a Clyket'
With which / whan þat hym leste / he it vnshette
And whan he wolde / paye his wyf hir dette 2048
In somer seson / thider wolde he go
And May his wyf/ and no wight but they two
And thynges / whiche þat were nat doon abedde
He in the gardyn / parfourned hem and spedde 2052
And in this wise / many a murye day
Lyued this Ianuarie / and fresshe May
But worldly ioye / may nat alwey dure
To Ianuarie / ne to no creature 2056
¶ O. sodeyn hape / o. thow ffortune vnstable Auctor
Lyk to the Scorpion / so deceyuable
That flaterest with thyn heed / whan thow wolt stynge
Thy tayl is deeth / thurgh thyn enuenymynge 2060
O. brotil ioye / o. swete venym queynte
O. Monstre / that so subtilly kanst peynte
Thy yiftes / vnder hewe of stedefastnesse
That thow deceyuest' bothe moore and lesse 2064

Why hastow Ianuarie / thus deceyued
That haddest hym / for thy fulle freend receyued
And now thow hast biraft hym / bothe his eyen
ffor sorwe of which / desireth he to dyen
Allas / this noble Ianuarie free
Amydde his lust and his prosperitee
Is woxen blynd / and that al sodeynly
He wepeth / and he waileth pitously
And ther with al / the fyr of Ialousye
Lest that his wyf/ sholde falle in som folye
So brente his herte / þat he wolde fayn
That som man / bothe hire and hym had slayn
ffor neither after his deeth / ne in his lyf
Ne wolde he / þat she were loue ne wyf
But euere lyue as wydwe / in clothes blake
Soul as the turtle / that lost hath hir make
[Bu [1]]t atte laste / after a Monthe or tweye [1 *Rats.* leaf 148, bk]
[H [1]]is sorwe gan aswage / sooth to seye
ffor whan he wiste / it may noon oother be
He paciently / took his aduersitee
Saue out of doute / he may nat forgoon
That he nas Ialous / euere moore in oon
Which Ialousye / it was so outrageous
That neither in halle / ne in noon oother hous
Ne in noon oother place / neuer the mo
He nolde suffre hire / for to ryde or go
But if þat he / hadde hond on hir alway
ffor which ful ofte / wepeth fresshe May
That loueth Damyan / so benygnely
That she moot outher dyen sodeynly
Or ellis / she moot han hym as hir leste
She wayteth / whan hir herte wolde breste
¶ Vp on that oother syde / Damyan
Bicomen is / the sorwefulleste man
That euere was / for neither nyght ne day
Ne myghte he speke a word to fresshe May

As to his purpos / of no swich matere
But if þat Ianuarie / moste it heere
That hadde an hand / vp on hire euere mo
But nathelees / by writyng to and fro
And pryuee signes / wiste he what she mente
And she knew eek / the fyn of his entente
¶ O· Ianuaire / what myghte it thee auaille
Thow myghtest se / as fer as Shippes saille
ffor as good / is blynd deceyued be
As to be deceyued / whan a man may se
Lo Argus / which þat hadde an hundred eyen
ffor al that euere / he koude poure or pryen
Yet was he blent· and god woot so been mo
That weneth wisly / that it be nat so
Passe ouer is an ese / and sey namoore
¶ This fresshe May / that I spak of so yoore
In warm wex / hath printed the Clyket·
That Ianuarie bar / of that smale wyket·
By which / in to his gardyn / ofte he wente
And Damyan / that knew al his entente
The Clyket· countrefeted pryuely [leaf 149]
Ther nys namoore to seye / but hastily
Som wonder / by this Cliket shal bityde
Which ye shal heren / if ye wol abyde
¶ O noble Ouyde / wel sooth seistow god woot·
What sleighte is it/ thogh it be long and hoot·
That he nel fynde it out· in som manere
By Pyramus and Thesbe / may men lere
Thogh they were kept ful longe / streyte ouer al
They been acorded / rownyng thurgh a wal
Ther no wight koude / han founde out swich a sleighte
But now to purpos / er that dayes eighte
Were passed / er the Monthe of Iuyl bifille
That Ianuarie / hath caught so greet a wille
Thurgh eggyng of his wyf/ hym for to pleye
In his gardyn / and no wight but they tweye

That in a morwe / vn to his May' seith he
Rys vp my wyf/ my loue / my lady free
The Turtles voys is herd / my dowue swete
The wynter is goon / with reynes wete
Com forth now / with thyne eyen Columbyn
How fairer been thy brestes / than is wyn
The gardyn / is enclosed al aboute
Com forth my white spouse / out of doute
Thow hast me wounded in myn herte / O wyf
No spot of thee / ne knew I al my lyf
Com forth / and lat vs taken oure desport'
I chees thee / for my wyf/ and my confort'
¶ Swiche olde lewed wordes / vsed he
On Damyan / a signe made she
That he sholde go biforn / with his Clyket'
This Damyan thanne / hath opned the wyket'
And in he stirte / and that in swich manere
That no wight myghte it se / neither yheere
And stille he sit / vnder a bussh anon
¶ This Ianuarie / as blynd as is a stoon
With Mayus in his hand / and no wight mo
In to his fresshe gardyn / is ago
And clapte to / the wyket sodeynly
Now wyf quod he / here nys but thow and .I.
[Th[1]at art the creature / that I best loue
ffor by that lord / that sit in heuene aboue
Leuere ich hadde / to dyen on a knyf
Than thee offende / trewe deere wyf
ffor goddes sake / thenk how I thee chees
Noght' for no coueitise doutelees
But oonly / for the loue I hadde to thee
And thogh þat I be old / and may nat see
Beth to me trewe / and I wol telle yow why
Thre thynges certes / shal ye wynne ther by
¶ ffirst loue of Crist' and to your self honour
And al myn heritage / toun and tour

[1] *Rats.* leaf 149, bk]

I yeue it yow / maketh chartres as ye leste
This shal be doon to morwe / er sonne reste
So wisly / god my soule / brynge in blisse
I pray yow first' in couenant ye me kisse
And thogh þat' I be Ialous / wyt me noght'
Ye been so depe / emp*r*inted in my thoght'
That whan þat I / considere youre beautee
And ther with al / the vnlikly elde of me
I may noght c*er*tes / thogh I sholde dye
fforbere / to been out of youre compaignye
ffor verray loue / this is with outen doute
Now kys me wyf' and lat vs rome aboute
¶ This fresshe May / whan she thise wordes herde
Benygnely / to Ianuarie answerde
But first and forward / she bigan to wepe
I haue quod she / a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye / and also myn honour
And of my wifhod / thilke tendre flour
Which þat I haue / assured in youre hond
Whan þat the preest' to yow my body bond
Wher fore / I wol answere in this manere
By the leue of yow / my lord so deere
I pray to god / þat neu*er*e dawe the day
That I ne sterue / as foule as womman may
If euere I do / vn to my kyn that shame
Or ellis / I empeyre so my name
That I be fals / and if I do that lakke
Do strepe me / and put me in a sakke
And in the nexte Ryuer / do me drenche [leaf 150]
I am a gentil womman / and no wenche
Why speke ye thus / but men been eu*er*e vntrewe
And wommen haue reproue / of yow ay newe
Ye han / noon oother contenance I leue
But speke to vs / of vntrust' and repreue
¶ And with that word / she saw wher Damyan
Sat in the bussh̄ / and coghen she bigan

And with hir fynger / signes made she
That Damyan / sholde clymbe vp on a tree
That charged was with fruyt / and vp he wente
ffor verraily / he knew al hir entente
And euery signe / þat she koude make
Wel bet than Ianuarie / hir owene make
ffor in a lettre / she hadde told hym al
Of this matere / how he werken shal
And thus I lete hym sitte / vp on the purye
And Ianuarie and May / romynge murye
¶ Bright was the day / and blew the firmament
Phebus hath of gold / his stremys doun ysent
To gladen euery flour / with his warmnesse
He was that tyme / in Geminis as I gesse
But litil / fro his declynacioñ
Of Cancer / Iouis exaltacioñ
And so bifel / that brighte morwe tyde
That in that gardyn / in the ferther syde
Pluto / that is the[1] kyng of ffairye [1 the *later*]
And many a lady / in his compaignye
ffolwynge his wyf / the queene Proserpyne
[2]Whos answere hath doon many a man pyne[2] [2—2 *in a later hand*]
¶ Whil that she gadrede / floures in the mede
In Claudyan / ye may the stories rede
How in his grysly Carte / he hir sette
This kyng of ffairye / thanne adown hym sette
Vp on a bench of turues / fressh and grene
And right anon / thus seyde he to his queene
¶ My wyf quod he / ther may no wight sey nay
Thexperience / so proueth euery day
The treson / which þat womman dooth to man
Ten hundred thousand / tellen I kan
[N[3]]otable / of youre vntrouthe and brotelnesse [3 *Rats.* lf 150, bk]
O Salomon wys / and richest of richesse
ffulfild of Sapience / and of worldly glorie
fful worthy been thy wordes / to memorie

To euery wight' that wit and reson kan
Thus preyseth he yet' the bontee of man
¶ Amonges a thousand men / yet foond I oon
But of wommen alle / foond I noon
¶ Thus seith the kyng' þat knoweth youre wikkednesse
And Ihesus filius Syrak' as I gesse
Ne speketh of yow / but selde reuerence
A wilde fyr / and corrupt pestilence
So falle vp on youre bodyes / yet to nyght'
Ne se ye noght' this honurable knyght'
By cause allas / þat he is blynd and old
His owene man / shal make hym Cokewold
Lo where he sit' the lechour in the tree
Now wol I graunten / of my magestee
Vn to this olde / blynde worthy knyght'
That he shal haue ayein / his eyen syght'
Whan þat his wyf' wolde doon hym vileynye
Thanne shal he knowen / al hir harlotrye
Bothe in repreue of hire / and othere mo
¶ Ye shal quod Proserpyne / wol ye so
Now by my modres sires soule / I swere
That I shal yeuen hire / suffisant answere
And alle wommen after / for hir sake
That thogh they be / in any gilt ytake
With face bold / they shul hem self excuse
And bere hem doun / that wolde hem accuse
ffor lakke of answere / noon of hem shal dyen
Al hadde man seyn a thyng' with bothe his eyen
Yet shal we wommen / visagen it hardily
And wepe and swere / and chide subtilly
So that ye men / shul been as lewed as gees
What rekketh me / of youre auctoritees
¶ I woot wel / þat this Iew / this Salomon
ffand of vs wommen / folyes many oon
But thogh þat he / ne fand no good womman
Yet hath ther founde / many another man

Wommen ful trewe / ful goode and *ver*tuous [leaf 151ᵀ]
Witnesse on hem / that dwelle in Cristes hous
With martirdom / they proued hir constaunce
The Romayn geestes / eek maken remembraunce
Of many a verray / trewe wyf also
But sire ne be nat wrooth / al be it so
Thogh *þat* he seyde / he foond no good womman
I pray yow / taak the sentence of the man
He mente thus / *þat* in sou*er*ayn bon̄tee
Nys noon but god / but neither he ne she
¶ Ey for verray god / that nys but oon
What make ye / so muche of Salomon
What' thogh / he made a temple goddes hous
What' thogh he were riche and glorious
So made he eek/ a temple / of false goddys
How myghte he do a thyng' *þat* moore forbode is
Pardee / as faire / as ye his name emplastre
He was a lechour / and an ydolastre
And in his elde / he verray god forsook'
And if god ne hadde / as seith the book'
Yspared hym / for his fadres sake / he sholde
Haue lost his regne / rather than he wolde
I sette right nought' of al the vileynye
That ye of wommen write / a Boterflye
I am a womman / nedes moot I speke
Or ellis swelle / til myn herte breke
ffor sithen he seyde / *þat* we been Iangleresses
As euere hool / I mote brouke my tresses
I shal nat spare / for no curteisye
To speke hym harm / *þat* wolde vs vileynye
¶ Dame quod this Pluto / be no lenger wrooth
I yeue it vp / but sith I swoor myn ooth
That I wolde graunten hym / his sighte ayein
My word shal stonde / I warne yow *cer*teyn
I am a kyng' it sit me noght to lye
¶ And I quod she / a queene of ffairye

Hir answere shal she haue / I vndertake
Lat vs namoore wordes / her of make
ffor sothe / I wol no lenger yow contrarie
¶ Now lat vs / turne agayn to Ianuarie
[Th[1]]at in the gardyn / with his faire May [[1] *Rats.* If 151, bk]
Syngeth ful murier / than the Papeiay
Yow loue I best and shal and oother noon
So longe / aboute the Alcyes is he goon
Til he was come / agayns thilke pirye
Wher as this Damyan / sitteth ful myrye
An heigh / among the fresshe leues grene
¶ This fresshe May / that is so bright and shene
Gan for to syke / and seyde allas my syde
Now sire quod she / for aught þat may bityde
I moste han / of the perys þat I se
Or I moot dye / so sore longeth me
To eten / of the smale perys grene
Help for hir loue / þat is of heuene queene
I telle yow wel / a womman in my plit
May han to fruyt/ so gret an appetit
That she may dyen / but she of it haue
¶ Allas quod he / þat I ne hadde here a knaue
That koude clymbe / allas allas quod he
ffor I am blynd / ye sire no fors quod she
¶ But wolde ye / vouche sauf / for goddes sake
The pirye inwith youre armes / for to take
ffor wel I woot þat ye mystruste me
Thanne sholde I clymbe / wel ynow quod she
So I my foot myghte sette vp on youre bak
¶ Certes quod he / ther on shal be no lak
Mighte I yow helpen / with myn herte blood
He stoupeth doun / and on his bak she stood
And caughte hir by a twiste / and vp she goth
Ladys I pray yow / þat ye be nat wroth
I kan nat glose / .I a rude man
And sodeynly / anon this Damyan

Gan pullen vp the smok / and in he throng'
¶ And whan þat Pluto / saugh this grete wrong'
To Ianuarie / he yaf agayn his sighte
And made hym see / as wel as euere he myghte
And whan that he / hadde caught his sighte agayn
Ne was ther neuere man / of thyng so fayn
But on his wyf/ his thoght was euere mo
Vn to the tree / he caste his eyen two
And say þat Damyan / his wyf had dressed [leaf 152]
In swich manere / it may nat ben expressed
But if I wolde speken / vncurteisly
And vp he yaf/ a roryng and a cry
As dooth the moder / whan the child shal dye
Out help / allas / harrow / he gan to crye
O. stronge lady·stoore / what dostow
¶ And she answerde / sire what eyleth yow
Haue pacience and reson / in youre mynde
I haue yow holpe / on bothe youre eyen blynde
Vp peril of my soule / .I shal nat lyen
As me was taught' to heele with youre eyen
Was no thyng bet' to make yow to se
Than strugle with a man / vp on a tree
God woot' I dide it in ful good entente
¶ Strugled quod he / ye algate In it wente
God yeue yow bothe / on shames deth to dyen
He swyued thee / I saw it with myne eyen
And ellis / be I hanged by the hals
¶ Thanne is quod she / my medicyne al fals
ffor certeinly / if þat ye myghte se
Ye wolde nat seyn / thise wordes vn to me
Ye han som glymsynge / and no parfit sighte
¶ I se quod he / as wel as euere I myghte
Thonked be·god / with bothe myne eyen two
And by my trouthe / me thoughte he dide thee so
¶ Ye maze maze / goode Sire quod she
This thank haue I / for I haue maad yow se

Allas quod she / þat euere I was so kynde
Now dame quod he / lat al passe out of mynde
Com doun my lief/ and if I haue myssayd
God help me so / as I am yuele apayd
But by my fadres soule / I wende haue seyn
How þat this Damyan / hadde by thee leyn
And þat thy Smok / hadde leyn vp on his bryst
¶ Ye sire quod she / ye may wene as yow lyst
But sire / a man that waketh out of his sleepe
He may nat sodeynly / wel taken keepe
Vp on a thyng ne seen it parfitly
Til that he be / adawed verraily
[1Rig]ht so a man / that longe hath blynd ybe [1 *Rats.* leaf 152, back]
[1N]e may nat sodeynly / so wel yse
ffirst whan his sighte / is newe come ageyn·
As he þat hath / a day or two yseyn
Til þat youre sighte / ysatled be a while
Ther may ful many a sighte yow bigile
Beth war I pray yow / for by heuene kyng
fful many a man / weneth to se a thyng
And it is al another / than it semeth
He þat mysconceyueth / he mysdemeth
And with that word / she lepte doun fro the tree
¶ This Ianuarie / who is glad but he
He kisseth hire / and clippeth hire ful ofte
And on hir wombe / he stroketh hire ful softe
And to his Palays / hom he hath hire lad
Now goode men / I pray yow to be glad
Thus endeth here / my tale of Ianuarie
God blesse vs / and his moder Seinte Marie . Amen .

¶ Here is ended the Marchantes tale / of Ianuarie

[leaf 153]
¶ Here folwen the Wordes of the Worthy Hoost to the ffrankeleyn.

[*Blank of ten lines in the MS.*]

EY goddes mercy / seyde oure Hoost tho
Now swich a wyf / I prey god kepe me fro
Lo whiche sleightes / and subtiltees
In wommen ben / for ay as bisy as bees
Ben they / vs sely men for to deceyue
And from a sooth / euere wol they weyue
By this Marchantes tale / it preueth weel
But doutelees / as trewe as any steel
I haue a wyf / thogh þat she poore be
But of hir tonge / a labbyng shrewe is she
And yit she hath / an heep of vices mo
Ther-of no fors / lat alle swiche thynges go
But wite ye what in conseil be it seyd
Me reweth soore / I am vn to hire teyd
ffor and I sholde / rekenen euery vice
Which þat she hath / ywis I were to nyce
And cause why / it sholde reported be
And toold to hire / of somme of this meynee
Of whom / it nedeth nat for to declare
Syn wommen / konnen oute swich chaffare
And eek my wit / suffiseth nat ther to
To tellen al / wher-fore my tale is do

[*No break in the MS.*]

SIDE-NOTES TO THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

[*As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.*]

p. 445, l. 1311. ¶ vxor est diligenda / q*uia* donu*m* dei est Ih*es*u*s* fili*us* Syrac ! dom*us* & diuicie dantu*r* a parentib*us* / a d*o*mino autem p*ro*prie / vxor bona vel prudens. [MS, leaf 138, back.]

p. 445, l. 1327. ¶ ffaciam*us* ei adiutorem / & ex[tracta costa de] corpore Ade fecit Euam / & dix[it pro vxore] relinq̃uet homo p*at*rem & m*at*rem & [adherebit &c.] et erunt̃ duo / in carne vna. [MS, leaf 139.]

p. 445, l. 1335. Vna caro vnu*m* Animu*m* in om*n*i Adversitate cogitat/. [MS, leaf 139, *in a later hand.*]

p. 446, l. 1362. ¶ Iacob enim p*er* consiliu*m* m*at*ris sue Rebecce &*cetera*. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 446, l. 1368. Iudith &*cetera* / de manib*us* Olof*er*ni. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 446, l. 1369. ¶ Et Abigail p*er* suu*m* bonu*m* consiliu*m* / viru*m* suu*m* Nabal / ab ira dauid libe*r*auit/. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 446, l. 1371. ¶ Ester &*cetera* Iudeos p*er* bonu*m* consiliu*m* simul cu*m* Mardocheo in regno Assueri &*cetera*. [MS, lf 139, bk.]

p. 446, l. 1376. ¶ Seneca / sicut nichil est sup*er*ius benigna co*n*iuge / ita nichil est crudelius infesta muliere. [MS, lf 139, bk.]

p. 446, l. 1378. ¶ Cato // vxoris linguam / si frugi est/ ferre memento/ [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 447, l. 1383. ¶ Ap*ostol*us P*aul*us Ad Eph*esiano*s // Diligite vx*ores* ves*tras* sicut *christus* dilexit eccl*es*iam &*cetera*. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 447, l. 1384. Ap*ostol*us // Ita viri debent dilig*ere* vx*ores* suas vt corpora sua / q*uia* qui suam vx*orem* diligit se ips*u*m diligit/ nemo vnq*uam* carnem suam odio h*abuit*/ set nutrit & fouet eam / et ¶ postea / vnusq*uisque* suam vx*orem* sicut ¶ se ips*u*m diligat. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 458, l. 1795. [Ar]ke diurne . q*uidam* *circulus* [. . . .] . . meto vocat*ur* Zodiac*us* [. . .] . . sol cotidie cressit. [MS, leaf 145, back, *in a later hand and faint ink.*]

GROUP F. FRAGMENT VII.

§ 1. THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ Sire ffrankeleyn / com neer/ if it youre wille be [on f° 153]
And sey vs a tale / for certes ye
konnen ther on / as muche as any man
¶ Nay sire quod he / but I wol seye as I kan
[1 W]ith hertly wyl / for I wol nat rebelle [1 *Rats.* leaf 153, back]
Agayns youre wyl / a tale wol I telle
Haue me excused / if þat I speke amys
My wyl is good / and lo my tale is this ☙

¶ Explicit ☙

SIDE-NOTES TO THE FRANKLIN'S TALE.

[*As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.*]

p. 500, l. 722. ¶ Vnde *Persius* ¶ Nec f[onte] caballino . . . *par*naso meme. [MS, leaf 154.]

p. 518, l. 1369. ¶ 30ª Atheniensium tiranni [cum Phidonem] necassent/ in *co*nuiuio filia[s eius virgi]nes ad se ve*n*ire iusseru*n*t/ & s[cotorum mo]re nudari / ac super pauimentu[m patris] sangu*i*ne cruentatas inpudicis ge[stibus] ludere / que paulisp*er* dissimulato [dolo]re / cu*m* tumulentos co*n*uiuas ce*r*neren[t] quasi ad requisita nature egredientes inuicem se co*m*plexe precipitauerun[t] in puteum vt *vir*ginitate morte se*r*uaren[t]. [MS, leaf 162.]

p. 519, l. 1395. ¶ Singulas has historias & plur[es] hanc mate*r*iam conce*r*nentes reci[tat] beatus Ieronimus contra Iouinian[um] in p*r*imo suo libro, ca*pitulo* .39. [MS, leaf 162.]

¶ Here bigynneth the ffrankeleyns tale [*on leaf 153, bk*]

[*THE PROEM.*]

THise olde gentil Britons / in hir dayes
Of diuerse auentures / maden layes
Rymeyed / in hir firste Briton tonge
Whiche layes / with hir Instrumentz they songe
Or ellis redden hem / for hire plesañce
And oon of hem / haue I in remembrañce
Which I shal seyn / with good wyl as I kan
¶ But sires / by cause I am a burel man
At my bigynnyng þ first I yow biseche
Haue me excused / of my rude speche
I lerned neuere / Rethorik þ certeyn
Thyng þat I speke / It moot be bare and pleyn
I sleepe neuere / in the Mount of Parnaso [leaf 154]
Ne lerned / Marcus Tullius Scithero [*Latin note, p. 499*]
Colours ne knowe I none / with outen drede
But swiche colours / as growen in the mede
Or ellis swiche / as men dye / or peynte
Colours of Rethoryk þ they ben to queynte
My Spirit þ feeleth nat of swich matere
But if yow list þ my tale shul ye heere

[*THE TALE.*]

IN Armorik þ that called is Britayne ¶ Narrat þ
Ther was a knyght þ þat louede & dide his payne
To serue a lady / in his beste wise
And many a labour / many a gret emprise

He for his lady wroghte / er she were wonne
ffor she was / oon the faireste vnder Sonne
And eek ther to / come of so heigh kynrede
That wel vnnethes / dorste this knyght for drede
Telle hire his wo / his peyne / and his distresse
But atte laste / she for his worthynesse
And namely / for his meke obeysance
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penance
That priuely / she fel of his acord
To taken hym / for hir housbonde & hir lord
Of swich lordshipe / as men han ouer hir wyues
And for to lede / the moore in blisse hir lyues
Of his fre wyl / he swoor hire as a knyght
That neuere in al his lyf he day ne nyght
Ne sholde vp on hym take / no maistrye
Agayn hir wyl / ne kothe hire Ialousye
But hire obeye / and folwe hir wyl in al
As any louere / to his lady shal
Saue / þat the name of soueraynetee
That wolde he haue / for shame of his degree
¶ She thonked hym / and with ful gret humblesse
She seyde sire / sith of youre gentillesse
Ye profre me / to haue so large a reyne
Ne wolde neuere god / bitwix vs tweyne
As in my gilt/ were outher werre / or stryf
Sire I wol be / youre humble trewe wyf
Haue heer my trouthe / til that myn herte broste
Thus been they bothe / in quiete and in reste
[ffor[1]] o thyng sires / saufly dar I seye [[1] *Rats.* leaf 154, back]
[T]hat freendes / euerich oother moote obey
If they wol longe holden compaignye
Loue wol nat be constreyned by maistrye
Whan maistrie comth / the god of loue anon
Beteth his wynges / and farwel he is gon
Loue is a thyng as any spirit free
Wommen of kynde / desiren libertee

And nat to been constreyned / as a thral
And so doon men / if I sooth seyn shal
Looke / who þat moost/ is pacient in loue
He is / at his auantage al aboue
Pacience / is an heigh ver*tu* cer*te*yn
ffor it venquysseth / as thise clerkes seyn
Thynges / that rigour sholde neuer*e* atteyne
ffor euery word / men may nat chide or pleyne
Lerneth to suffre / or ellis so moot I gon
Ye shul it lerne / wher so ye wole or non
ffor in this world / cer*te*yn ther no wight is
That he ne dooth / or seith som tyme amys
Ire / siknesse / or constellacioñ
Wyn / wo / or chaungyng of co*m*plexioñ
Causeth ful ofte / to doon amys or speken
On euery wrong' a man may nat be wreken
After the tyme / moste be temper*a*unce
To euery wight' þat kan on gouernaunce
And therfore / hath thïs wise worthy knyght/
To lyue in ese / suffrañce hire bihight'
And she to hym / ful wisly gan to swere
That neuer*e* / sholde ther be defaute in here
¶ Here may men seen / an humble wys acord
Thus hath she take / hir seruant and hir lord
Seruant in loue / and lord in mariage
Thanne was he bothe / in lordshipe & ser*u*age
Seruage nay / but in lordshipe aboue
Sith he hath / bothe his lady and his loue
His lady certes / and his wyf also
The which / þat lawe of loue acordeth to
And whan he was / in this pro*sper*itee
Hom with his wyf' he gooth to his contree
Nat' fer fro Pedmark' ther his dwellyng was [leaf 155]
Wher as he lyueth / in blisse and in solas
¶ Who koude telle / but he hadde wedded be
The ioye / the ese / and the pro*sper*itee

That is / bitwix an housbonde / and his wyf
A yeer and moore / lasted this blisful lyf
Til þat the knyght of which I speke of thus
That of Kairrud / was clepid Arueragus
Shoope hym to goon / and dwelle a yeer or twayne
In Engelond / that clepid was ek Britayne
To seke in armes / worshipe and honour
ffor al his lust he sette in swich labour
And dwelled ther two yeer / the book seith thus
¶ Now wol I stynte / of this Arueragus
And speke I wole / of Dorigene his wyf
That loueth hir housbonde / as hir hertes lyf
ffor his absence / wepeth she and siketh
As doon thise noble wyues / whan hem liketh
She moorneth / waketh / waileth / fasteth / pleyneth
Desir of his presence / hir so destreyneth
That al this wide world / she set at noght
Hir freendes whiche þat knowe / hir heuy thoght
Conforten hire / in al that euer they may
They prechen hire / they telle hire nyght and day
That causelees / she sleeth hir self allas
And euery confort possible in this cas
They doon to hire / with al hir bisynesse
Al for to make hire / leue hir heuynesse
¶ By proces / as ye knowen euerichoon
Men may so longe / grauen in a stoon
Til som figure / ther Inne emprinted be
So longe / han they conforted hire / til she
Receyued hath / by hope and by resoñ
The emprintyng of hir consolacioñ
Thurgh which / hir grete sorwe gan aswage
She may nat alwey / duren in swich rage
¶ And eek Arueragus / in al this care
Hath sent hire lettres hom / of his welfare
And that he wole / come hastily agayn
Or ellis hadde this sorwe / hir herte slayn

[Hire[1]] freendes sawe hir sorwe gan to slake [[1] *Rats.* If 155, bk]
[[1]An]d preyde hire on knees / for goddes sake
To come / and romen hire in compaignye
Awey to dryue / hir derke fantasye
And finally / she graunted that requeste
ffor wel she saw / *þat* it was for the beste
¶ Now stood hir Castel / faste by the See
And often / with hir freendes walketh she
Hir to disporte / vp on the bank an heigh
Wher as she / many a Shipe and Barge seigh
Seillynge hir cours / wher as hem liste go
But thanne was that' a *par*cel of hir wo
ffor of hir self/ ful ofte allas seith she
Is ther no shipe / of so manye as I se
Wol bryngen hom my lord / thanne were myn herte
Al warisshed / of hise bittre peynes smerte
¶ Another tyme / there wolde she sitte and thynke
And caste hir eyen / downward fro the Brynke
But whan she seigh / the grisly Rokkes blake
ffor verray fere / so wolde hir herte quake
That on hir feet' she myghte hir noght' sustene
Thanne wolde she / sitte adoun vp on the grene
And pitously / in to the See biholde
And seyn right thus / with sorweful sikes colde
¶ Eterne god / that thurgh thy purueiance
Ledest the world / by certeyn gouernance
In ydel as men seyn / ye no thyng make
But lord / thise grisly / feendly Rokkes blake
That semen rather / a foul confusiõ
Of werk / than any fair creaciõ
Of swich a *par*fit' wys god and a stable
Why han ye wrought' this werk vnresonable
ffor by this werk' Southñ / Northñ / ne west' ne Est'
Ther nys yfostred / man / ne bryd / ne beest'
It doth no good to my wit' but anoyeth
Se ye nat lord / how mankynde it destroyeth

An hundred thousand bodies / of mankynde
Han Rokkes slayn / al be they nat in mynd
Which mankynde / is so fair part of thy werk
That thow it madest lyk to thyn owen merk
Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee [leaf 156]
Toward mankynde / but how thanne may it be
That ye swiche menes make / it to destroyen
Whiche menes do no good / but euere anoyen
I woot wel / clerkes wol seyn as hem leste
By argumentz / that al is for the beste
Thogh I ne kan / the causes nat yknowe
But thilke god / þat made wynd to blowe
As kepe my lord / this my conclusioũ
To clerkes / lete I al disputisoũ
But wolde god / þat alle thise Rokkes blake
Were sonken in to helle / for his sake
Thise Rokkes sleen myn herte / for the feere
Thus wolde she seyn / with many a pitous teere
¶ Hir freendes sawe / that it was no disport
To romen by the See / but disconfort
And shopen / for to pleyen / som wher ellys
They leden hire / by Ryuers and by wellys
And eek in othere places delitables
They dauncen / and they pleyen at Ches & tables
¶ So on a day / right in the morwe tyde
Vn to a gardyn / that was ther bisyde
In which / that they hadde maad hir ordinance
Of vitaille / and of oother purueiance
They goon and pleye hem / al the longe day
And this was / on the sixte morwe of May
Which may hadde peynted / with his softe shoures
This gardyn / ful of leues / and of floures
And craft of mannes hond / so curiously
Arrayed hadde / this gardyn trewely
That neuere was ther gardyn / of swich prys
But if it were / the verray Paradys

The odour of floures / and the fresshe sight
Wolde han maked / any herte lighte.
That euere was born / but if to greet siknesse
Or to greet sorwe / helde it in destresse
So ful it was / of beautee with plesaunce
At after dyner / gonne they to daunce
And synge also / saue Dorigen allone
Which made alwey / hir compleynt and hir mone
[1 ffo]r she ne saugh hym / on the daunce go [1 Rats. If 156, bk]
That was hir housbonde / and hir loue also
But nathelees / she moste a tyme abyde
And with good hope / lete hir sorwe slyde
¶ Vp on this daunce / amonges othere men
Daunced a Squier / bifore Dorigen
That fressher was / and Iolier of array
As to my doom / than is the Monthe of May
He syngeth / daunceth / passyng any man
That is / or was / sith þat the world bigan
Ther with he was / if men sholde hym discryue
Oon of the beste farynge man / on lyue
Yong strong right vertuous / and riche and wys
And wel biloued / and holden in gret prys
And shortly / if the sothe I tellen shal
Vnwitynge of this Dorigen at al
This lusty Squier / seruant to Venus
Which / that yclepid was Aurelius
Hadde loued hire / best of any creature
Two yeer and moore / as was his auenture
But neuere dorste he tellen hire / his greuance
With outen coppe / he drank al his penance
He was despeyred / no thyng dorste he seye
Saue in his songes / som what wolde he wreye
His wo / as in a general compleynynge
He seyde he louede / and was biloued no thynge
Of which matere / made he many layes
Songes / compleyntes / roundels / vyrelayes

How þat he dorste nat his sorwe telle
But langwissheth / as a fuyre dooth in helle
And dye he moste he seyde / as dide Ekko
ffor Narcisus / that dorste nat telle hir wo
In oother manere / than ye heere me seye
Ne dorste he nat to hire / his wo biwreye
Saue that *par*auenture / som tyme at daunces
Ther yong folk / kepen hir obseruaunces
It may wel be / he looked on hir face
In swich a wise / as man þat asketh *grace*
But no thyng wiste she / of his entente
Nathelees it happed / er they thennes wente
¶ By cause / that he was / hir neghebour [leaf 157]
And was a man / of worshipe and honour
And hadde yknowen hym / of tyme yoore
They fille in speche / and forth moore and moore
Vn to this purpos / drough Aurelius
And whan he saugh his tyme / he seyde thus
¶ Madame quod he / by god that this world made
So þat I wiste / it myghte youre herte glade
I wolde that day / þat youre Arueragus
Wente ouer the See / that I Aurelius
Hadde went / ther neuere I sholde haue come agayn
ffor wel I woot my seruyce is in vayn
My gerdon is / but brestyng of myn herte
Madame reweth / vp on my peynes smerte
ffor with a word / ye may me sle or saue
Here at youre feet god wolde þat I were graue
I ne haue as now / no leyser moore to seyé
Haue mercy swete / or ye wol do me deye
¶ She gan to looke / vp on Aurelius
Is this youre wil quod she / and sey ye thus
Neuere erst quod she / ne wiste I what ye mente
But now Aurelie / I knowe youre entente
By thilke god / that yaf me soule and lyf
Ne shal I neuere / been vntrewe a wyf

In word ne werk' as fer as I haue wyt'
I wol been hys / to whom þat I am knyt'
Taak this for fynal / as of me
But after that' in pleye thus seyde she
¶ Aurelie quod she / by heighe god aboue
Yet wolde I graunte yow-/ to been youre loue
Syn I yow se / so pitously complayne
Looke what day / þat endelong Britayne
Ye remoeue alle the Rokkes / stoon by stoon
That they ne lette / shipe ne Boot' to goon
I seye / whan ye han maad / the coost so clene
Of Rokkes / that ther nys no stoon ysene
Thanne wol I loue yow / best of any man
Haue heer my trouthe / in al that euere I kan
¶ Is ther noon oother grace / in yow quod he
¶ No by that lord quod she / that maked me
[ffor[1]] wel I woot' that it shal neuere bityde ['Rats. If 157, bk]
['L]at swiche folies / out of youre herte slyde
What deyntee / sholde a man han his lyf
ffor to loue / another mannes wyf
That hath hir body / whan so that hym liketh
¶ Aurelius / ful ofte soore siketh
Wo was Aurelie / whan þat he this herde
And with a sorweful herte / he thus answerde
¶ Madame quod he / this were an inpossible
Thanne moot I dye / of sodeyn deth horrible
And with that word / he turned hym anon
Tho coome / hir othere freendes many oon
And in the Aleyes / romeden vp and doun
And no thyng wiste / of this conclusioun
But sodeynly / bigonne reuel newe
Til that the brighte sonne / loste his hewe
ffor thorisonte / hath reft the Sonne his light'
This is as muche to seye / as it was nyght'
And hom they goon / in ioye and in solas
Saue oonly / wrecched Aurelius allas

He to his hous is goon / with sorweful herte
He seeth / he may nat from his deeth asterte
Hym semed / that he felte his herte colde
Vp to the heuene / hise hondes he gan holde
And on his knowes bare / he sette hym doun
And in his rauynge / seyde his orisoun
ffor verray wo / out of his wit he breyde
He nyste what he spak' but thus he seyde
With pitous herte / his pleynt hath he bigonne
Vn to the goddes / and first vn to the sonne
¶ He seyde Appollo / god and gouernour
Of euery plaunte / herbe / tree / and flour
That yeuest after thy declynacioñ
To ech of hem / his tyme and his sesoñ
As thyn herberwe / chaungeth / lowe or heighe
Lord Phebus / cast thy merciable eighe
On wrecche Aurelie / which þat am but lorn
Lo lord / my lady hath my deeth ysworn
With outen gilt' but thy benygnytee
Vp on my dedly herte / haue som pitee
ffor wel I woot' lord Phebus / if yow lest/ [leaf 158]
Ye may me helpen / saue my lady best'
Now voucheth sauf / þat I may yow deuyse
How þat I may been holpe / and in what wyse
¶ Youre blisful Suster / lucyna the shene
That of the See / is chief goddesse and queene
Thogh Neptunus / haue deitee in the See
Yet Empiresse / abouen hym is she
Ye knowen wel lord / that right as hir desir
Is / to be quyked / and lighted of youre fyr
ffor which / she folweth yow / ful bisily
Right so the See / desireth naturelly
To folwen hire / as she þat is goddesse
Bothe in the See / and Ryuers moore and lesse
Wherfore lord Phebus / this is my requeste
Do this myracle / or do myn herte breste

That now next/ at this opposicioñ
Which in the signe / shal be of the Lion)
As preyeth hire / so greet a flood to brynge
That fyue fadme at the leeste / it ouer sprynge
The hyeste Rok' in Armoryk' Britayne
And lat this flood / endure yeris twayne
Thanne certes / to my lady / may I seye
Holdeth youre heste / the Rokkes been aweye
¶ Lord Phebus / dooth this myracle for me
Pray hire / she go no faster cours than ye
I seye this / prayeth youre Suster/ þat she go
No faster cours than ye / thise yeris two
Thanne shal she been euene / at the fulle alway
And spryng flood lasten / bothe nyght and day
And but she vouche sauf/ in swich manere,
To graunte me / my souerayn lady deere
Pray hire / to synken euery Rok/ adown
In to / hir owene dirke Regioun
Vnder the ground / ther Pluto dwelleth Inne
Or neuere mo / shal I my lady wynne
Thy temple in Delphos / wol I barfoot seke
Lord Phebus / Se the teerys on my cheke
And of my peyne / haue som compassioun
And with that word / in swowne he fil adoun
[And1] longe tyme / he lay forth in a traunce [1 Rats. If 158, bk]
[1 H]is brother / which that knew of his penaunce
Vp caughte hym / and to bedde he hath hym broght'
Despeired / in this torment' and this thoght
Lete I / this woful creature lye
Chese he for me / wher he wol lyue or dye
¶ Arueragus / with heele / and greet honour
As he þat was / of Chiualrie the flour
Is comen hom / and othere worthy men
O blisful artow now / thow dorigen
That' hast thy lusty housbonde / in thyn armes
The fresshe knyght' the worthy man of armes

That loueth thee / as his owene hertes lyf
No thyng list hym / to been ymagynatyf
If any wight hadde spoke / whil he was oute
To hire of loue / he ne hadde of it no doute
He noght entendeth / to no swich matere
But daunceth / Iusteth / maketh hir good cheere
And thus in ioye and blisse / I lete hem dwelle
And of the Syke Aurelius / wol I telle
¶ In langour / and in torment furyus
Two yeer and moore / lay wrecche Aurelius
Er any foot' he myghte on erthe gon
Ne confort in this tyme / hadde he non
Saue of his brother / which þat was a Clerk
He knew of al this wo / and al this werk
ffor / to noon oother creature certeyn
Of this matere / he dorste no word seyn
Vnder his brist' he baar it moore secree
Than euere dide Panfilus / for Galathee
His brist was hool / with oute for to sene
But in his herte / ay was the arwe kene
And wel ye knowe / þat of a Sursanure
In Surgerye / is perilous the cure
But men myghte touche the arwe / or come therby
His brother / weepe and wayled pryuely
Til at the laste / hym fil in remembrance
That whils he was / in Orliens in ffrance
As yonge clerkes / that been lykerous
To reden Artes / that been curious
Seken / in euery halke / and euery herne [leaf 159]
Particuler Sciences / for to lerne
He hym remembred / þat vp on a day
At Orliens in Studie / a book he say
Of Magyk naturel / which his felawe
That was that tyme / a Bachiler of lawe
Al were he ther / to lerne another craft'
Hadde priuely / vp on his desk' ylaft'

Which book spak muchel / of the operacioñs
Touchynge / the .xxviij. mansioñs
That longen to the Moone / and swich folye
As in oure dayes / is nat worth a flye
ffor holy chirches feith / in oure bileue
Ne suffreth / noon illusioñ vs to greue
And whan this book' was in his remembrance
Anon for ioye / his herte gan to dañce
And to hym self / he seyde pryuely
My brother / shal be warisshed hastily
ffor I am siker / þat ther be sciences
By whiche / men make diuerse apparences
Swiche / as thise subtile / Tregettours pleye
ffor ofte at festes / haue I wel herd seye
That Tregettours / with Inne an halle large
Haue maad come In / a water / and a barge
And in the halle / rowen vp and doun
Som tyme hath semed / come a grym leoun
And som tyme floures sprynge / as in a mede
Som tyme a vyne / and grapes white and rede
Som tyme a Castel / al of lym and Stoon
And whan hem lyked / voyded it anoon
Thus semed it' to euery mannes sighte
¶ Now thanne conclude I thus / þat if I myghte
At Orliens / som old felawe yfynde
That hadde / this Moones mansions in mynde
Or oother Magyk' naturel aboue
He sholde wel / make my brother han his loue
ffor with an apparence / a clerk may make
To mannes sighte / þat alle the Rokkes blake
Of Britaigne / were yvoyded euerichon
And Shippes / by the brynke / comen and gon
[And[1]] in swich forme / enduren a day or two
Thanne were my brother / warisshed of his wo
Thanne moste she nedes / holden hir biheste
Or ellis / he shal shame hire / at the leeste

[1] *Rats.* leaf 159, back]

¶ What sholde I make / a lenger tale of this
Vn to his brotheres bed / he comen is
And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon
To Orliens / that he vp stirte anon
And on his wey forthward / thanne he is fare
In hope / for to been lissed of his care
¶ Whan they were come / almoost to that Citee
But if it were / a two furlong or thre
A yong clerk / romynge by hym self they mette
Which þat in latyn / thriftily hem grette
And after that/ he seyde a wonder thyng
I knowe quod he / the cause of youre comyng
And er they ferther / any foote wente
He tolde hem / al that was in hir entente
¶ This Britoñ clerk hym asked of felawes
The whiche þat he hadde knowe / in olde dawes
And he answerde hym / þat they dede were
ffor which / he weepe ful ofte many a teere
¶ Doun of his hors / Aurelius lighte anon
And with this Magicien / forth he is gon
Hom to his hous / and maden hem wel atese
Hem lakked no vitaille / þat myghte hem plese
So wel arrayed hous / as ther was oon
Aurelius in his lyf / saw neuere noon
¶ He shewed hym / er he wente to soper
fforestes / Parkes / ful of wilde deer
Ther saw he hertes / with hir hornes hye
The gretteste / þat euere were seyn *with* eye
He say of hem / an hundred slayn *with* houndes
And somme with arwes blede / of bittre woundes
¶ He saw / whan voyded were thise wilde deer
Thise ffawconers / vp on a fair Ryuer
That with hir hawkes / han the heron slayn
¶ Tho saugh he knyghtes / Iustyng in a playn
And after this / he dide hym this plesaunce
That he hym shewed / his lady on a daunce

On which hym self / he daunced as hym thoughte [leaf 160]
And whan this maister / þat this magyk wroughte
Saugh it was tyme / he clapte his handes two
And farwel / al our reuel was ago
And yet remoeued they neuere / out of the hous
Whil they sawe / al this sighte merueillous
But in his studie / ther as his bookes be
They sitten stille / and no wight' but they thre
¶ To hym this maister / called his Squyer
And seide hym thus / is redy oure soper
Almoost' an houre it is / I vndertake
Sith I yow bad / oure soper for to make
Whan that thise worthy men / wenten with me
In to my studie / ther as my bookes be
¶ Sire quod this Squyer / whan it liketh yow
It is al redy / thogh ye wol right now
Go we thanne soupe quod he / as for the beste
This amorous folk' som tyme mote han hir reste
¶ At after soper / fille they in tretee
What somme sholde / this Maistres gerdoñ be
To remoeuen / alle the Rokkes of Britayne
And eek from Gerounde / to the mouth of Sayne
He made it straunge / and swoor so god hym saue
Lasse than a thousand pound / he wolde nat haue
Ne gladly for that somme / he wolde nat gon
¶ Aurelius / with blisful herte anon
Answerde thus / fy on a thousand pound'
This wyde world / which þat men seye is round'
I wolde it yeue / if I were lord of it'
This bargayn is ful dryue / for we ben knyt'
Ye shal be payed trewely / by my trouthe
But looketh now / for no necligence or slouthe
Ye tarie vs heer / no lenger than tomorwe
¶ Nay quod this clerk' haue heer' my feith to borwe
¶ To bedde is goon Aurelius / whan hym leste
And wel neigh al that nyght/ he hadde his reste

What for his labour / and his hope of blisse
His woful herte / of penaunce hadde a lisse
¶ Vp on the morwe / whan þat it was day.
To Britayne / tooke they the righte way
[¹Aur]elius / and this Magicien bisyde [¹ *Rats.* to f 100, back]
And been descended / ther they wolde abyde
And this was / as thise bookes me remembre
The colde / frosty seson of decembre
¶ Phebus wax old / and hewed lyk latoñ
That' in his hote declynacioñ
Shoon as the burned gold / *with* stremys brighte
But now in Capricorn / adoun he lighte
Where as he shoon ful pale / I dar wel seyn
The bittre frostes / with the sleet and reyn
Destruyed hath the grene / in euery yerd'
Ianus sit by the fyr / with double berd' ¶ Ianus biceps.
And drynketh / of his bugle horn the wyn
Biforn hym stant brawen / of the tusked swyn
And Nowel / crieth euery lusty man
¶ Aurelius / al þat eue*r*e he kan
Dooth to this maister / cheere & reue*r*ence
And preyeth hym / to doon his diligẽnce
To bryngen hym / out of his peynes smerte
Or with a swerd / þat he wolde slytte his herte
¶ This subtil clerk' swich routhe hadde of this man
That nyght and day / he spedde hym that he kan
To wayten a tyme / of his conclusioñ
This is to seyn / to make illusioñ
By swich an apparence / or Iogelrye
I ne kan / no termes of Astrologye
That she and euery wight' sholde wene and seye
That of Britayne / the Rokkes were aweye
Or ellis / were sonken vnder grounde
So at the laste / he hath his tyme yfounde
To maken his Iapes / and his wrecchednesse
Of swich / a super*s*ticious cursednesse

His tables tolletanes / forth he broght
fful wel corrected / ne ther lakked nogh
Neither his collect ne his expans yeris
Ne hise rootes / ne hise othere geris
As been his centris / and hise argumentz
And hise proporcionels conuenientz
ffor hise equacions / in euery thyng
And by his .8. speere / in his wirkyng
He knew ful wel / how fer Alnath was shoue [leaf 161]
ffro the heed / of thilke fixe Aries aboue
That in the .9. speere / considered is
fful subtilly/ he kalkuled al this
¶ Whan he hadde founde / his firste mansioũ
He knew the remenaunt by proporcioũ
And knew the arisyng of his Moone wel
And in whos face / and terme / and euery del
And knew ful wel / the Moones mansioũ
Acordaunt / to his operacioũ
And knew also / hise othere obseruaunces
ffor swiche illusions / and swiche meschañces
As hethen folk vseden / in thilke dayes
ffor which no lenger / maked he delayes
But thurgh his magyk for a wyke or tweye
It semed/ that alle the Rokkes were aweye
¶ Aurelius / which þat yet despeired is
Wher he shal han his loue / or fare amys
Awaiteth nyght and day / on this myracle
And whan he knew / that ther was noon obstacle
That voyded were / thise Rokkes euerichon
Doun to his maistres feet he fil anon
And seyde / I woful wrecche Aurelius
Thonke yow lord / and lady myn Venus
That me han holpen / fro my cares colde
And to the temple / his wey forth hath he holde
Wher as he knew / he sholde his lady se
And whan he saw his tyme / anon right he

With dredful herte / and with ful humble cheere
Salued hath / his souerayn lady deere
¶ My righte lady / quod this woful man
Whom I moost drede / and loue as I best kan
And lothest were / of al this world displese
Nere it þat I for yow haue swich disese
That I moste dyen heer/ at youre foot anon
Noght wolde I telle yow / how me is wo bigon
But certes / outher moste I dye / or pleyne
Ye sleen me giltlees / for verray peyne
But of my deeth / thogh þat ye haue no routhe
Auyseth yow / er that ye breke your trouthe
[1 Repen]teth yow / for thilke god aboue [1 *Rats.* leaf 161, back]
Er ye me sleen / by cause that I yow loue /
ffor madame / wel ye woot what ye han hight
Nat þat I chalange / any thyng of right
Of yow my souereyn lady / but youre grace
But in a gardyn yond / at swich a place
Ye woot right wel / what ye bihighten me
And in myn hand / your trouthe plighten ye
To loue me best god woot ye seyden so
Al be / þat I vnworthy am ther to
Madame I speke it / for the honour of yow
Moore than to saue / myn hertes lyf right now
I haue do so / as ye comaunded me
And if ye vouche sauf / ye may go se
Dooth as yow list haue youre biheste in mynde
ffor quyk/ or dced / right ther ye shal me fynde
In yow lyth al / to do me lyue or deye
But wel I woot the Rokkes been aweye
¶ He taketh his leue / and she astoned stood
In al hir face / nas a drope of blood
She wende neuere haue come / in swich a trappe
Allas quod she / þat euere this sholde happe
ffor wende I neuere / by possibilitee
That swich a Monstre / or merueille myghte be

It is agayns / the proces of nature
And hom she gooth / a sorweful creature
ffor verray feere / vnnethe may she go
She wepeth / wayleth / al a day or two
And swowneth / that it routhe was to se
But why it was / to no wight tolde she
ffor out of towne / was goon Arueragus
But to hir self/ she spak and seyde thus
With face pale / and with ful sorweful cheere
In hir compleinte / as ye shal after heere
¶ Allas quod she / on thee ffortune I pleyne
That vnwar / wrapped hast me in thy cheyne
ffor which tescape / woot I no socour
Saue oonly / deeth / or deshonour
Oon of thise two / bihoueth me to chese
But nathelees / yet haue I leuere to lese
My lyf / than of my body to haue a shame/ [leaf 162]
Or knowen my seluen fals / or lese my name
And with my deeth / I may be quyt ywis
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this
And many a mayde / yslayn hir self allas
Ratlrer / than with hir body doon trespas
¶ Yis certes / lo thise stories beren witnesse
Whan .xxx. tirauntz / ful of cursednesse
Hadde slayn Phidon / in Atthenes atte feste [Latin note, p. 499]
They comaunded / his doghtren for tareste
And bryngen hem / biforn hem in despit
Al naked / to fulfille hir foul delit
And in hir fadres blood / they made hem daunce
Vp on the pauement god yeue hem meschaunce
ffor which / thise woful maydens / ful of drede
Rather / than they wolde lese hir maydenhede
They pryuely / been stirt in to a welle
And dreynte hem seluen / as the bokes telle
¶ They of Mecene / leete enquere and seke
Of Lacedomye / fifty maydens eke

On whiche / they wolden doon hir lecherye
But was ther noon / of al that compaignye
That she nas slayn / and with a good entente
Chees rather for to dye / than assente 1384
To been oppressed / of hir maydenhede
Why sholde I thanne / to dye been in drede
¶ Loo eek / the tiraunt Aristoclides
That loued a mayden / highte Stymphalides 1388
Whan þat hir fader / slayn was on a nyght
Vn to Dianes temple / gooth she right
And hente the ymage / in hir handes two
ffro which ymage / wolde she neuere go 1392
No wight ne myghte / hir handes of it arace
Til she was slayn / right in the selue place
Now sith þat maydens / hadden swich despit [*Latin note*, p. 490]
To been defouled / with mannes foul delit 1396
Wel oghte a wyf/ rather hir seluen sle
Than be defouled / as it thynketh me
¶ What shal I seyn / of Hasdrubales wyf
That at Cartage / birafte hir self hir lyf 1400
[ffor[1]] whan she saw / that Romayns wan the town [[1]*Rats.* If 102, bk]
[[1] S]he took hir children alle / and skipte adown
In to the fyr / and chees rather to dye
Than any Romayn / dide hire vileynye 1404
¶ Hath nat Lucresse / yslayn hir self allas
At Rome / whan she oppressed was
Of Tarquyn / for hir thoughte it was a shame
To lyuen / whan she hadde lost hir name 1408
¶ The .vij. maydens / of Milesie also
Han slayn hem self/ for verray drede and wo
Rather than folk/ of Gawle / hem sholde oppresse
Mo than a thousand stories / as I gesse 1412
Koude I now telle / as touchyng this matere
¶ Whan habradace was slayn / his wyf so deere
Hir seluen slow / and eet hir blood to glyde
In Habradaces woundes / depe and wyde 1416

And seyde / my body / at the leeste way
Ther shal no wight defoulen if I may
¶ What sholde I mo ensamples / her of sayn
Sith that so manye / han hem seluen slayn
Wel rather / than they wolde defouled be
I wol conclude / that it is bet for me
To sleen my self than ben defouled thus
I wol be trewe / vn to Arueragus
Or rather sle my self in som manere
As dide / democienis doghter deere
By cause / þat she wolde nat defouled be
¶ O Cedasus / it is ful gret pitee
To reden / how thy doghtren deyde allas
That slowe hem self for swich maner cas
¶ As greet a pitee was it or wel moore
The Theban mayden / that for Nychanore
Hir seluen slow / right for swich manere wo
¶ Another Theban mayden / dide right so
ffor oon of Macedonye / hadde hire oppressed
She with hir owene deeth / hir maydenhed redressed
¶ What shal I seyn / of Nyceratis wyf
That for swich cas / birafte hir self hir lyf
¶ How trewe eek / was to Alcebiades
His loue / that rather for to dyen chees
Than for to suffre / his body vnburyed be
¶ Lo which a wyf / was Alceste quod she
¶ What Omer / of goode Penolopee
Al Grece / knoweth of hir chastitee
¶ Pardee of Laodomya / is writen thus
That whan at Troye / was slayn Protheſçlaus
No lenger wolde she lyue / after his day
¶ The same / of noble Porcia telle I may
With oute Brutus / koude she nat lyue
To whom she hadde / al hool hir herte yeue
¶ The parfit wifhod / of Arthemesye
Honoured is / thurgh al the Barbarye

[leaf 163]

¶ O Teuta queene / thy wifly chastitee
To alle wyues / may a Mirour bee
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
¶ Thus pleyned Dorigene / a day or tweye
Purposynge euere þat she wolde deye
¶ But nathelees / vp on the thridde nyght
Hom cam Arueragus / this worthy knyght
And asked hire / why þat she weepe so soore
And she gan wepen / euer lenger the moore
¶ Allas quod she / þat euere was I born
Thus haue I seyd quod she / thus haue I sworn
And tolde hym al / as ye han herd bifore
It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore
¶ This housbond *with* glad cheere / in frendly wise
Answerde and seyde / as I shal yow deuyse
¶ Is ther oght ellis dorigen / but this
¶ Nay nay quod she / god help me so as wys
This is to muche / and it were goddes wille
¶ Ye wyf quod he / lat slepen that is stille
It may be wel perauenture / yet to day
Ye shul youre trouthe holden / by my fay
ffor god so wisly / haue mercy vp on me
I hadde wel leuere / ystiked for to be
ffor verray loue / which þat I to yow haue
But if ye sholde / youre trouthe kepe and saue
Trouthe is the hyeste thyng þat man may kepe
But *with* that word / he brast anon to wepe
And seyde I yow forbede / vp peyne of deeth
That neuere whil thee lasteth / lyf ne breeth
[To no[1]] wight tel thow / of this auenture
[As[1]] I may best / I wol my wo endure
Ne make / no contenance of heuynesse
That folk of yow / may demen harm or gesse
¶ And forth he clepyd / a Squyer and a mayde
Goth forth anon with Dorigen / he sayde

[*Not in Reg.* 18 C ii, *lf* 154, *bk*; *or Sloane* 1685, *lf* 155, *bk*; *or Harl.* 1758, *lf* 135; *or Harl.* 7335, *lf* 151, *bk*; *or Harl.* 7333, *lf* 85 *bk*, *col.* 2; *or Sloane* 1686, *lf* 205; *or Reg.* 17 D xv, *lf* 188, *bk* (*leaf out of Harl.* 1239). *Not in any Cambr. or Bodl. MS, or Christ-Church.*]

[1] *Rats.* lf 163, bk]

And bryngeth hire / to swich a place anon
They toke hir leue / and on hir wey they gon
But they ne wiste / why they thider wente
He nolde to no wight tellen his entente 1492
[. . . . . [*Not in Reg.* 18 *C ii, leaf* 155; *or Sloane* 1685, *if* 156; *or Harl.* 7335, *if* 152; *or Harl.* 1758, *leaf* 135, *bk; or Harl.* 7333, *if* 86, *col.* 1; *or Sloane* 1686, *if* 205, *bk; or Reg.* 17 *D xv, if* 189; *leaf out of Harl.* 1239. *l.* 1493-8 *known only in the Ellesmere MS.*]
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
¶ This Squyer / which þat highte Aurelius
On Dorigen / þat was so amorus 1500
Of auenture / happed hir to meete
Amydde the town / right in the quykkest strete
As she was boun / to goon the wey forth right
Toward the gardyn / ther as she had hight 1504
And he was / to the gardynward also
ffor wel he spyed / whan she wolde go
Out of hir hous / to any maner place
But thus they meete / of auenture or grace 1508
And he saluеth hire / with glad entente
And asked of hire / whiderward she wente
¶ And she answerde / half as she were mad
Vn to the gardyn / as myn housbond bad 1512
My trouthe for to holde / allas / allas
¶ Aurelius / gan wondren on this cas
And in his herte / hadde greet compassiõn
Of hire / and of hir lamentacion 1516
And of Arueragus / the worthy knyght
That bad hir holden / al that she had hight
So looth hym was / his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe
And in his herte / he caughte of this greet routhe 1520
Considerynge the beste / on euery syde
That fro his lust yet were hym leuere abyde
Than doon so heigh / a cherlyssh wrecchednesse
Agayns franchise / and alle gentillesse 1524

ffor which in fewe wordes / seyde he thus
¶ Madame / seyeth to youre lord Arueragus
That sith I se / his grete gentillesse
To yow / and eek I se wel youre distresse
That hym were leuere han shame / and that were routhe
Than ye to me / sholde brēke thus your trouthe [leaf 164]
I haue wel leuere / euere to suffre wo
Than I departe the loue / bitwix yow two
I yow relesse madame / in to youre hond
Quyt euery serement and euery bond
That ye han maad to me / as her biforn
Sith thilke tyme / which þat ye were born
My trouthe I plighte / I shal you neuer repreue
Of no biheeste / and here I take my leue
As of the treweste / and the beste wyf
That euere yet I knew / in al my lyf
But euery wyf / be war of hir biheste
On Dorigene / remembreth at the leste
Thus kan a Squyer / doon a gentil dedę
As wel as kan a knyght with outen drede
¶ She thonketh hym / vp on hir knees al bare
And hom vn to hir housbond / is she fare
And tolde hym al / as ye han herd me sayd
And be ye siker / he was so wel apayd
That it were inpossible / me to write
What sholde I lenger / of this cas endite
¶ Arueragus / and Dorigene his wyf
In souereyn blisse / leden forth hir lyf
Neuere eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene
He cherisseth hire / as thogh she were a queene
And she was to hym trewe / for euere moore
Of thise two folk / ye gete of me namoore
¶ Aurelius / that his cost hath al forlorn
Curseth the tyme / that euere he was born
Allas quod he / allas that I bihighte
Of pured gold / a thousand pound of wighte

Vn to this Philosophre / how shal I do
I se namoore / but that I am for-do
Myn heritage / moot I nedes selle
And been a beggere / here may I nat dwelle
And shamen al my kynrede / in this place
But I of hym / may gete bettre grace
But nathelees / I wol of hym assaye
At certeyn dayes / yeer by yeer to paye
[And[1]] thonke hym / of his grete curteisye [1 *Rats.* If 164, bk]
[[1]M]y trouthe wol I kepe / I nel nat lye
¶ With herte soor / he gooth vn to his cofre
And broghte gold / vn to this Philosophre
The value / of fyue hundred pound I gesse.
And hym bisecheth / of his gentillesse
To graunten hym dayes / of the remenant
And seyde Maister / I dar wel make auant
I fayled neuere / of my trouthe as yit
ffor sikerly / my dette shal be quyt
Towardes yow / how euere þat I fare
To goon abegged / in my kirtel bare
But wolde ye vouche sauf vp on seuretee
Two yeer or thre / for to respiten me
Thanne were I wel / for ellis moot I selle
Myn heritage / ther is namoore to telle
¶ This Philosophre / sobrely answerde
And seyde thus / whan he thise wordes herde
Haue I nat holden couenant vn to thee
¶ Yis certes / wel and trewely quod he
¶ Hastow nat had / thy lady as thee liketh
¶ No no quod he / and sorwefully he siketh
¶ What was the cause / tel me if thow kan
¶ Aurelius / his tale anon bigan
And tolde hym al / as ye han herd bifore
It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore
¶ He seyde / Arueragus / of gentillesse
Hadde leuere dye / in sorwe and in distresse

Than þat his wyf/ were of hir trouthe fals
The sorwe of dorigen / he tolde hym als
How looth hir was / to ben a wikked wyf
And þat she leuere had lost that day hir lyf
And þat hir trouthe / she swoor thurgh Innocence
She neuere erst hadde herd speke / of apparence
That made me han of hire / so greet pitee
And right as frely / as he sente hir me
As frely sente I hire / to hym agayn
This al and som / ther is namoore to sayn
¶ This Philosophre answerde / leeue brother
Euerich of yow / dide gentilly til oother
Thow art a Squyer / and he is a knyght
But god forbede / for his blisful myght
But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede
As wel as any of yow / it is no drede
¶ Sire I relesse thee / thy thowsand pound
As thow right now / were cropen out of the ground
Ne neuere er now / ne haddest knowen me
ffor sire / I wol nat take a peny of thee
ffor al my craft ne noght for my trauaille
Thow hast ypayed wel / for my vitaille
It is ynogh / and fare wel haue good day
And took his hors / and forth he goth his way
¶ Lordynges / this question / than wol I aske now
Which was the mooste free / as thynketh yow
Now telleth me / er that ye ferther wende
I kan namoore / my tale is at an ende

[leaf 165]

¶ Here endeth the ffrankeleyns tale

[*No more text on this page of the MS.*]

GROUP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

§ 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

HENGWRT MS.

[*THE PROEM.*]

The Nonne ⁊, [*head-line*] [leaf 165, back]

(1)

THe Ministre / and the norice vn to vices
Which that men clepeth in englissh ydelnesse
That porter at the gate is / of delices
To eschuen / and by hir cont*r*arie hire opp*r*esse
That is to seyn / by leueful bisynesse
Wel oghte we / to doon al oure entente
Lest that the feend / thurgh ydelnesse vs hente

(2)

¶ ffor he / that with his thousand cordes slyë
Continuelly / vs wayteth to biclappe
Whan he may man / in ydelnesse espye
He kan so lightly / cacche hym in his trappe
Til that a man / be hent right by the lappe
He nys nat war / the feend hath hym in honde
Wel oghte vs werche / and ydelnesse withstonde

(3)

¶ And thogh men dradden / neu*er*e for to dye
Yet seen men wel / by reson doutelees
That ydelnesse / is roten slogardye
Of which ther neu*er*e comth / no good nencrees
And seen that Slouthe / hir holdeth in a lees
Oonly for to slepe / and ete and drynken
And to deuouren / al that othere swynken

(4)

¶ And for to putte vs / from swich ydelnesse
That cause is / of so greet confusiõn
I haue here doon / my feithful bisynesse
After the legende / in translaciõn
Right of thy glorious lyf/ and passiõn
Thow with thy gerland / wroght of rose & lilie
Thee mene I / mayde and martir Seinte Cecilie

(5)

Inuocacio ad mariam.

And thow / that flour of virgines art alle
Of whom that Bernard / list so wel to write
To thee / at my bigynnyng I first calle
Thow confort of vs wrecches / do mendite
Thy maydens deeth / that wan thurgh hir merite
The eternal lyf/ and of the feend victorie
As man may after / reden in hir Storie

(6)

¶ Thow mayde and moder / doghter of thy sone [leaf 106]
Thow welle of mercy / synful soules cure
In whom that god / for bountee chees to wone
Thow humble and heigh / ouer euery creature
Thow nobledest so ferforth oure nature
That no desdaign / the makere hadde of kynde
His sone / in blood & flessh / to clothe & wynde

(7)

¶ With Inne the Cloistre blisful / of thy sydis
Took mannes shape / the eternal loue and pees
That of the tryne compas / lord and gyde is
Whom erthe and see / and heuene out of relees
Ay heryen / and thow virgyne wemmeles
Bar of thy body / and dweltest mayde pure
The creatour / of euery creature

(8)

Assembled is in thee Magnificence 50
With mercy / goodnesse / and swich pitee
That thow that art' the sonne of excellence
Nat oonly / helpest hem þat prayen thee 53
But ofte tyme / of thy benygnytee
ſſul frely / er that men / thyn helpe biseche
Thow goost biforn / and art hir lyues leche 56

(9)

Now help thow meke / and blisful faire mayde 57
Me flemed wrecche / in this desert of galle
Thynk on the womman Cananee / that sayde
That whelpes eten / somme of the crommes alle 60
That from hir lordes table / been yfalle
And thogh that I / vnworthy sone of Eue
Be synful / yet accepte my bileue 63

(10)

¶ And for that feith is deed / with outen werkis 64
So for to werken / yif me wit and space
That I be quyt/ from thennes / that moost derk is
O thow / that art so fair / and ful of grace 67
Be myn Aduocate / in that heighe place
Ther as with outen ende / is songe Osanne
Thow cristes moder / doghter deere of Anne 70

(11)

[1An]d of thy light' my soule in prison lighte [1 Rats. lf 166, bk]
That troubled is / by the contagioñ
Of my body / and also by the wighte
Of erthely lust' and fals affeccioñ 74
O. hauene / o. refut' o. sauacioñ
Of hem / that been in sorwe and in distresse
Now help / for to my werk I wol me dresse 77

(12)

¶ Yet praye ich yow / þat reden that I write
fforyeue me / that I do no diligence
This ilke storie / subtilly tendite
ffor bothe haue I / the wordes and sentence
Of hym / that at the Seintes reuerence
The storie wroot' and folwen hir legende
And pray yow / that ye wol my werk amende

(13) [*THE TALE.*]

First wolde I yow / the name of Seinte Cecilie
Expowne / as men may in hir storie se
It is to seyn on englissh / heuenes lilie
ffor pure chastnesse / of virginitee
Or for she whitnesse hadde of honestee
And grene of conscience / and of good fame
The swote sauour lilie / was hir name

Interpretacio nominis Cecilie quam ponit frater Iacobus de Ianuensis in legenda. aurea.

(14)

¶ Or Cecile is to seyn / the wey to blynde
ffor she ensample was / by good techynge
Or ellis Cecile / as I writen fynde
Is ioyned / by a manere conioignynge
Of heuene / and lia / and here in figurynge
The heuene is set' for thoght of holynesse
And lia / for hir lastynge bisynesse

(15)

¶ Cecile may eek be seyd in this manere
Wantynge of blyndnesse / for hir grete light'
Of Sapience / and for hir thewes clere
Or ellis lo / this maydenes name bright'
Of heuene and leos comth / for which by right'
Men myghte hire wel / the heuene of peple calle
Ensample of goode / and wise werkes alle

(16)

¶ For leos / peple in englissh is to seye [leaf 167]
And right as men may / in the heuene see
The sonne and moone / and sterres euery weye
Right so men goostly / in this mayden free 109
Sayen / of feith / the magnanymytee
And eek the cleernesse hool of Sapience
And sondry werkes / brighte of excellence 112

(17)

¶ And right so / as thise Philosophres write 113
That heuene is swift and round / & eek brennynge
Right so / was faire Cecile the white
fful swift and bisy / euere in good werkynge 116
And round & hool / in good perseuerynge
And brennyng / euere in charite / ful brighte
Now haue I yow declared / what she highte 119

Note to l. 120. ¶ *gregorius* in registro [Epist.] li*bro* .10. Ad Eulogium *patriarcham* scribit/. Indicamus *prætere*[a] quia *grauem* hic in*terpretum* difficultatem patiuntur/ dum enim non sunt qui *sensum* de sensu exprimant/ set *transferre semper verborum* proprietatem volunt *omnem ductorum sensum* confundunt/ &*cetera*. [*Migné, Patrologia, vol.* ⁷⁷, *col.* 1099.]

(18)

This mayde bright Cecilie / as hir lyf seith Cecilia virgo clarissima.
Was come of Romayns / and of noble kynde [*Latin note, see above*]
And from hir Cradel / vp fostred in the feith
Of crist and baar his gospel in hir mynde 123
She neuere cessed / as I writen fynde
Of hir prayere / and god to loue and drede
Bisekyng hym / to kepe hir maydenhede 126

(19)

¶ And whan this mayden sholde / vn til a man 127
Ywedded be / that was ful yong of age
Which that ycleped was Valerian
And day was comen / of hir mariage 130
She ful deuout and humble in hir corage
Vnder hir robe of gold / that sat ful faire
Hadde next hir flessh / yclad hire in an haire 133

(20)

¶ And whil that the Organs / maden melodie
To god allone / in hir herte / thus soong she
O · lord my soule / and eek my body gye
Vnwemmed / lest that I confounded be
And for his loue / that deyde vp on the tree
Euery seconde / and thridde day she faste
Ay biddyng in hir orisons ful faste

(21)

[Th]e nyght cam / and to bedde moste she gon [*Rats.* leaf 167, back]
With hire housbonde / as ofte is the manere
And priuely / to hym she seyde anon
O swete / and wel biloued spouse deere
Ther is a conseil / and ye wolde it heere
Which that right fayn / I wolde vn to yow seye
So that ye swere / ye shul it nat biwreye

(22)

¶ Valerian gan faste / vn to hir swere
That for no cas / ne thyng þat myghte be
He sholde neuere mo biwreyen here
And thanne at erst/ to hym seyde she
I haue an Aungel / which that loueth me
That with gret loue / wher so I wake or slepe
Is redy ay / my body for to kepe

(23)

¶ And if that he / may feelen out of drede
That ye me touche / or loue in vileynye
He right anon / wol sleen yow with the dede
And in youre youthe / thus ye shullen dye
And if that ye / in clene loue me gye
He wol yow loue as me / for youre clennesse
And shewe to yow / his ioye and his brightnesse

(24)

¶ This Valerian / corrected as god wolde
Answerde agayn / if I shal trusten thee
Lat me that Aungel seen / and hym biholde
And if that it/ a verray Aungel be
Thanne wol I doon / as thow hast prayed me
And if thow loue another man / for sothe
Right with this swerd / than wol I sle yow botho

(25)

¶ Cecile answerde / right in this wise
If that yow list the Aungel shal ye se
So that ye trowe on crist and yow baptise
Goth forth to Via Apia . quod she
That fro this town / ne stant but Milys thre
And to the poure folkes / that ther dwellen
Sey hem right thus / as that I shal yow tellen

(26)

¶ Telle hem / that I Cecile / yow to hem sente [leaf 163]
To shewen yow / the goode Vrban the olde
ffor secree nedes / and for good entente
And whan that ye / Seint Vrban han biholde
Telle hym the wordes / whiche I to yow tolde
And whan that he / hath purged you fro synne
Thanne shal ye seen that Aungel / er we twynne

(27)

¶ This Valerian / is to the place gon
And right as hym was taught by his lernynge
He foond / this holy olde Vrban anon
Among the Seintes buryels lotynge
And he anon / with outen tariynge
Dide his message / and whan that he it tolde
Vrban for ioye / hise handes gan vp holde

1 latitantem.

(28)

¶ The teerys from hise eyen / leet he falle
Almyghty lord / o Ihesu crist quod he
Sowere of chaast conseil / hierde of vs alle
The fruyt of thilke seed / of chastitee
That thow hast sowe in Cecilie / taak to thee
Lo lyk a bisy bee / with outen gyle
Thee serueth ay / thyn owne thral Cecile

(29)

¶ ffor thilke spouse / that she took but now
fful lyk a fiers leon / she sendeth heere
As meke / as euere was any lamb to yow
And with that word / anon ther gan appeere
An old man / clad in white clothes cleere
That hadde a book with lettre of gold in honde
And gan / biforn Valerian to stonde

(30)

¶ Valerian as deed / fil doun for drede
Whan he hym say / and he vp hente hym tho
And on his book right thus he gan to rede
O. lord / o. feith / o. god with oute mo
O. cristendom / and fader of alle also
Abouen alle / and oueral euery where
Thise wordes / al with gold ywriten were

(31)

[1]W]han this was rad / thanne seyde this olde man [1 *Rats.* lf 168, bk]
Leuestow this thyng or no / sey ye / or nay
I leue al this thyng quod Valerian
ffor sother thyng than this / I dar wel say
Vnder the heuene / no wight thynke may
Tho vanysshed this olde man / he nyste where
And pope[2] Vrban / hym cristned right there [2 *blotted out*]

(32)

¶ Valerian goth hom / and fynt Cecilie
In with his chambre / with an Aungel stonde
This Aungel hadde / of Roses and of lilie
Corones two / the whiche he bar in hondo
And first to Cecile / as I vnderstonde
He yaf that oon / and after gan he take
That oother / to Valerian hir make

(33)

¶ With body clene / and with vnyémmed thoght
Kepeth ay wèl / thise corones quod he
ffro Paradys / to yow / haue I hem broght
Ne neuere mo / ne shal they roten be
Ne lese hir swote sauour / trusteth me
Ne neuere wight shal seen hem with his eye
But he be chaast / and hate vileynye

(34)

¶ And thow Valerian / for thow so soone
Assentedest to good conseil also
Sey what thee list and thow shalt han thy boone
I haue a brother / quod Valerian tho
That in this world / I loue no man so
I pray yow / that my brother may han grace
To knowe the trouthe / as I do in this place

(35)

¶ The Aungel seyde / god liketh thy requeste
And bothe / with the palm of martirdom
Ye shullen come / vn to his blisful feste
And with that word / Tiburce his brother coom
And whan that he / the sauour vndernoom
Which þat the Roses / and the lilies caste
With Inne his herte / he gan to wondre faste

(36)

¶ And seyde / I wondre this tyme of the yere [leaf 169]
Whennes / that swote sauour / cometh so
Of Rose and lilies / that I smelle heere
ffor thogh I hadde hem / in myne handes two
The sauour myghte in me / no depper go
The swete smel / that in myn herte I fynde
Hath chaunged me / al in another kynde

(37)

¶ Valerian seyde / two corones han we
Snow white and Rose reed / þat shynen clere
Which þat thyne eyen / han no myght to se
And as thow smellest hem / thurgh my prayere
So shalt ow seen hem / leue brother deere
If it so be / thow wolt / with outen slouthe
Bileue aright and knowen verray trouthe

(38)

¶ Tiburce answerde / seystow this to me
In soothnesse / or in dreem I herkne this
In dremes quod Valerian / han we be
Vn to this tyme / brother myn ywys
But now at erst / in trouthe oure dwellyng is
How wostow this quod Tiburce / in what wyse
Quod Valerian / that shal I thee deuyse

(39)

¶ The Aungel of god / hath me the trouthe ytaught
Which thow shalt seen / if that thow wolt reneye
The ydoles / and be clene / and ellis naught
And of the myracle / of thise corones tweye
Seint Ambrose / in his preface / list to seye
Solempnely / this noble doctour deere
Commendeth it and seith in this manere

(40)

¶ The palme of martirdom / for to receyue
Seinte Cecile / fulfild of goddes yifte
The world / and eek hir chambre gan she weyue
Witnesse Tiburces / and Cecilies shrifte
To whiche / god of his bountee wolde shifte
Corones two / of floures wel smellynge
And made his Aungel / hem the corones brynge

(41)

[1Th]e mayde hath broght men / to blisse aboue [1 Rate. leaf 169, back]
The world hath wist what it is worth certeyn
Deuocion / of chastitee to loue
Tho shewed hym Cecile / al open and pleyn
That alle ydoles / nys but a thyng in veyn
ffor they been dowmbe / and ther to they been deue
And charged hym / hise ydoles for to leue

(42)

¶ Who so þat trowetlr nat this / a beest he is
Quod tho Tiburce / if that I shal nat lye
And she gan kisse his brest that herde this
And was ful glad / he koude trouthe espye
This day I take thee / for myn allye
Seyde this blisful / faire mayde deere
And after that she seyde as ye may heere

(43)

¶ Lo right so / as the loue of Crist quod she
Made me thy brotheres wyf / right in that wise
Anon for myn allie / heere take I thee
Syn that thow wolt/ thyne ydoles despise
Go with thy brother now / and thee baptise
And make thee clene / so þat thow mowe biholde
The Aungeles face / of which thy brother tolde

(44)

¶ Tiburce answerde / and seyde brother deere
ffirst tel me whider that I shal / and to what man
To whom quod he / com forth with right' good cheere
I wol thee lede / vn to the pope[1] Vrban [1 pope *blotted out, and* Bissop *written over it.*]
Til Vrban / brother myn Valerian
Quod tho Tiburce / woltow me thider lede
Me thynketh / that it were a wonder dede

(45)

¶ Ne menestow nat Vrban / quod he tho
That is so ofte / dampned to be deed
And woneth in halkes / alwey to & fro
And dar nat ones / putte forth his heed
Men sholde hym brennen / in a fyr so reed
If he were founde / or þat men myghte hym spye
And we also / to bere hym compaignye

(46)

¶ And whil we seken / thilke diuinytee [leaf 170]
That is yhyd / in heuene priuely
Algate / ybrend in this world shul we be
To whom Cecile / answerdē boldely
Men myghten dreden / wel and skilfully
This lyf to lese / myn owene deere brother
If thys were lyuyng oonly / and noon oother

(47)

¶ But ther is bettre lyf / in oother place
That neuere shal be lost' ne drede thee noght'
Which goddes sone / vs tolde thurgh his grace
That fadres sone / hath alle thynges wroght'
And al that wroght is / with a skilful thoght'
The goost that fro the fader / gan procede
Hath souled hem / with outen any drede

(48)

¶ By word and by myracle / he goddes sone
Whan he was / in this world / declared heere
That ther was oother lyf / ther men may wone
To whom answerde Tiburce / o suster deere
Ne seydestow right now / in this manere
Ther nys but o god / lord in sothfastnesse
And now of thre / how maystow bere witnesse

(49)

¶ That shal I telle quod she / er I go
Right as a man / hath sapiences thre
Memorie / engyn / and intellect also
So in o beynge / of diuinytee
Thre persones / may ther right wel be
Tho gan she hym / ful bisily to preche
Of cristes come / and of his peynes teche

(50)

¶ And manye pointes / of his passiõ
How goddes sone / in this world was *with*holde
To doon mankynde / pleyn remissiõ
That was ybounde / in synne / and cares colde
Al this thyng she vn to Tiburce tolde
And after this / Tiburce in good entente
With Valerian / to pope[1] Vrban he wente

[1] pope *blotted out, and* byssop *written over it.*]

(51)

[2]Th]at vrbanus thanked god / and with glad herte and light
He cristned hym / and made hym in that place
Parfit in his lernyng goddes knyght
And after this / Tiburce gat swich grace
That euery day / he say in tyme and space
The Aungel of god / and euery maner boone
That he god axed / it was sped ful soone

[2] *Rats.* If 170]

(52)

¶ It were ful hard / by ordre for to seyn
How many wondres / Ihesus for hem wroghte
But at the laste / to tellen short/ and pleyn
The sergeantz / of the town of Rome hem soghte
And hem biforn Almache / the Prefect broghte
Which hem opposed / and knew al hir entente
And to the ymage of Iubiter / hem sente

(53)

¶ And seyde / who so wol nat sacrifise
Swape of his heed / this is my sentence heer
Anon thise martirs / that I yow deuyse
Oon Maximus / that was an Officer
Of the Prefectes / and his Corniculer
Hem hente / and whan he forth the Seintes ladde
Hym self he weep / for pitee that he hadde

(54)

¶ Whan Maximus / hadde herd the Seintes loore
He gat hym / of the tormentours leue
And ladde hem to his hous / with oute moore
And with hir prechyng er that it were eue
They gonnen / fro the tormentours to reue
And fro Maxime / and fro his folk echone
The false feith / to trowe in god allone

(55)

¶ Cecile cam / whan it was woxen nyght
With preestes / that hem cristned alle yfeere
And afterward / whan day was woxen light
Cecile hym seyde / with a ful stedefast cheere
Now cristes owene knygntes / leue and deere
Cast al awey / the werkes of derknesse
And armeth yow / in armure of brightnesse

(56)

¶ Ye han for sothe / ydoon a greet bataille [leaf 171]
Youre cours is doon / youre feith han ye conserued
Goth to the corone of lyf/ that may nat faille
The rightful Iuge / which that ye han serued
Shal yeue it yow / as ye han it disserued
And whan this thyng was seyd / as I deuyse
Men ledde hem forth / to doon the sacrifise

(57)

¶ But whan they weren / to the place broght
To tellen shortly / the conclusioun
They nolde encense / ne sacrifice right noght
But on hir knees / they setten hem adoun
With humble herte / and sad deuocioun
And losten / bothe hir heuedes / in the place
Hir soules wenten / to the kyng of grace

(58)

¶ This Maxim*us* / that say this thyng bityde
With pitous teerys / tolde it anon right
That he hir soules / saugh to heuene glyde
With Aungeles / ful of cleernesse / and of light
And with his word / conuerted many a wight
ffor which Almachius / dide hym so bete
With whippe of leed / til he his lyf gan lete

(59)

¶ Cecile hym took / and buryed hym anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softely
With Inne hir buryyng place / vnder the stoon
And after this / Almachius hastily
Bad hise Ministres / fecchen openly
Cecilie / so þat she myghte in his presence
Doon sacrifice / and Iubiter encense

(60)

¶ But they conuerted / at hir wise loore
Wepten ful sore / and yauen ful credence
Vn to hir word / and cryden moore & moore
Crist goddes sone / with outen difference
Is verray god / this is al oure sentence
That hath so good a seruant / hym to serue
This with o voys / we trowen / thogh we sterue

(61)

[¹Alm]achius / that herde of this doynge [¹ *Rats.* ff 171, bk]
Bad fecchen Cecilie / that he myghte hir se
And alderfirst lo / this was his axynge
What maner womman / artow . quod he
I am a gentil womman born / quod she .
I axe thee quod he / thogh it the greue
Of thy religion / and of thy bileue

(62)

¶ Ye han bigonne / youre question folily
Quod she / that wolden two answeres conclude
In o demande / ye axed lewedly
Almachie answerde / vn to that similitude
Of whennes comth / thyn answeryng so rude
Of whennes quod she / whan that she was freyned
Of conscience / and of good feith vnfeyned

(63)

¶ Almachius seyde / ne takestow noon hede
Of my power / and she answerde hym / this
Youre myght quod she / ful litel is to drede
ffor euery / mortal mannes power nys
But lyk a bladdre / ful of wynd ywis
ffor with a nedles point whan it is blowe
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe

(64)

¶ fful wrongfully / bigonne thow quod he
And yet in wrongꝰ is al thy perseuerañce
Wostow natꝰ how / oure myghty princes free
Han thus comanded / and maad ordinañce
That euery cristen wightꝰ shal han penañce
But if that he / his cristendom withseye
And goon al quytꝰ if he wol it reneye

(65)

¶ Youre Prynces erren / as youre nobleye dooth
Quod tho Cecile / and with a wood sentence
Ye make vs gilty / and is nat sooth
ffor ye þat knowen welꝰ / oure Innocence
ffor as muche / as we doon a reuerence
To cristꝰ and for we bere a cristen name
Ye putte on vs / a cryme / & eek a blame

(66)

¶ But we that knowen / thilke name so [leaf 172]
ffor vertuous / we may it nat withseye
Almache answerde / chees oon of thise two
Do sacrifice / or cristendom reneye
That thow mowe now / escapen by that weye
At which / this holy / blisful faire mayde
Gan for to laughe / and to the Iuge she sayde

(67)

¶ O Iuge confus / in thy nycetee
Wiltow / that I reneye Innocence
To maken me / a wikked wightꝰ quod she
Lo / he dissimuleth heere in audience
He stareth and woodeth / in his aduertence
To whom Almachius / vnsely wrecche
Ne wostow natꝰ how fer my myght may strecche

(68)

¶ Han noght oure myghty princes / to me yeuen
Ye bothe power / and auctoritee
To maken folk / to dyen or to lyuen
Why spekestow so prowdly / thanne to me
I speke noght but stedefastly quod she
Nat proudly / for I seye / as for my syde
We haten dedly / thilke vice of pryde

(69)

¶ And if thow drede nat a sooth to here (andire)
Thanne wol I shewe / al openly by right
That thow hast maad / a ful greet lesyng here (hie)
Thow seist thy princes / han thee yeuen myght
Bothe for to sleen / and for to quyken a wight
Thow that ne mayst but oonly lyf byreue
Thow hast noon oother power / ne no leue

(70)

¶ But thow mayst seyn / thy princes han thee maked
Ministre of deeth / for if thow speke of me
Thow lyest for thy power is ful naked
Do wey thy boldnesse / seyde Almachius tho
And sacrifice / to oure goddes / er thow go
I recche nat what wrong that thow me profre
ffor I kan suffre it/ as a Philosophre

(71)

[But[1]] thilke wronges / may I nat endure [[1] *Rats.* leaf 172, back]
[[1]T]hat thow spekest of oure goddes here quod he
Cecilie answerde / o nyce creature
Thow seydest no word / syn thow spak to me
That I ne knew ther-with thy nycetee
And that thow were / in euery maner wise
A lewed Officer / a veyn Iustise

(72)

¶ Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outter (exterioribus oculis) eyen
That thow nart blynd / for thyng þat we seen alle
That is a stoon / that men may wel espien
That ilke stoon / a god thow wolt it calle
I rede thee / lat thyn hand vp on it falle
And taste it wel / and stoon thow shalt it fynde
Syn that thow seest nat / with thyne eyen blynde

(73)

¶ It is a shame / that the peple shal
So scornen thee / and laughe at thy folye
ffor comenly / men woot it wel ouer al
That myghty god / is in hise heuenes hye
And thise ymages / wel thow mayst espye
To thee / ne to hem self / mowe noght profite
ffor in effect they be nat worth a myte

(74)

¶ Thise / and swiche othere / seyde she
And he weex wrooth / and bad men sholde hir lede
Hoom til hir hous / and in hir hous quod he
Bren hire / right in a Bath of flambes rede
And as he bad / right so was doon the dede
ffor in a Bath / they gonne hire faste shetten
And nyght and day / greet fyr they vnder betten

(75)

¶ The longe nyght and eek a day also
ffor al the fyr / and eek the Bathes hete
She sat al coold / and feeled no wo
It made hir nat o drope for to swete
But in that Bath / hir lyf she moste lete
ffor he Almachius / with a ful wikke entente
To sleen hire in the Bath / his sonde sente

(76)

¶ Thre strokes in the nekke / he smoot hire tho [leaf 173]
The tormentour / but for no maner chaunce
He myghte noght smyte al hir nekke atwo
And for ther was / that tyme an ordinaunce
That no man / sholde doon man swich penaunce
The ferthe strook to smyten / softe or soore
This tormentour / ne dorste do namoore

(77)

¶ But half deed / with hir nekke ycoruen there
He lefte hir lye / and on his wey he went
The cristen folk whiche þat aboute hire were
With shetes / han the blood ful faire yhent
Thre dayes / lyued she in this torment
And neuere cessed / hem the feith to teche
That she hadde fostred / hem she gan to preche

(78)

¶ And hem she yaf / hir moebles / and hir thyng
And to the Pope[1] Vrban / bitook hem tho [[1] Pope *croct out, and* byssop *written over it.*]
And seyde / I axed þis of heuene kyng
To han respit thre dayes / and namo
To recommende to yow / er that I go
Thise soules / lo / and þat I myghte do werche
Here of myn hous / perpetuelly a cherche

(79)

¶ Seint Vrban / with hise deknes pryuely
The body fette / and buryed it by nyghte
Among hise othere Seintes honestly
Hir hous / the chirche of Seinte Cecilie highte
Seint Vrban halwed it/ as he wel myghte
In which / in to this day / in noble wyse
Men doon to crist and to his seinte seruyse.

¶ Here is ended / the Nonnes tale ☙

SIDE-NOTES TO CLERK'S TALE, HENGWRT MS.

(From Petrarch's Latin original: see the Society's *Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.*)

[*As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.*]

p. 404, l. 44. ¶ Est ad ytalie lat*us* occiduu*m* vesul*us* [ex Appenini] Iugis mons altissim*us* qui v*er*tice nu[bila super]ans liquido sese ingerit etheri / Mons [suapte] nobilis natura / padi ortu nobilissim*us* qu[i latere] fonte laps*us* exiguo orient*em* cont*ra* sole*m* fert[ur &c.] [MS, leaf 173, back.]

p. 405, l. 57. ¶ Int*er* cet*er*a ad radic*em* Vesuli t*er*ra Saluciar*um* vic*is* & castell*is*. [MS, leaf 174.]

p. 412, l. 282. ¶ vt expedit*is* curis alijs ad visendu*m* d*omi*ni sui sponsam cu*m* puellis comitib*us* p*roper*aret. [MS, leaf 177, back.]

p. 412, l. 295. ¶ q*uu*m Walter*us* cogitabundus incedens ea*m*q*ue* co*m*pellans no*mine*. [MS, leaf 177, back.]

p. 414, l. 337. ¶ Et insolito tanti hospit*is* aduentu stupidam inuenit/ [MS, leaf 178.]

p. 414, l. 344. ¶ Et p*at*ri tuo placet inquid & michi vt vxor mea sis / et credo idip*su*m tibi placeat / set h*ab*eo ex te querere &*cetera*. [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 414, l. 356. ¶ Sine vlla frontis aut v*er*bi impugnacione. [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 414, l. 358. ¶ Nil ego vnq*ua*m sciens nedu*m* facia*m* set ecia*m* cogitabo quod cont*ra* animu*m* tuu*m* sit/ nec tu aliquid facies / et si me mori iusseris quod moleste feram. [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 415, l. 372. ¶ dehinc ne quid reliquia*rum* fortune vet*er*is nouam inferat in domu*m* / nudari eam iussit/ [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 416, l. 400. //Atq*ue* ap*u*d o*mn*es sup*ra* fide*m* cara & ven*er*abilis f*act*a est/ vix q*uo*d hijs ip*s*is qui illius originem nou*er*ant/ p*er*suaderi posset Ianicule nata*m* esse tant*us* vite / tant*us* mor*um* decor ea v*er*bor*um* g*ra*uitas atq*ue* dulcedo quib*us* om*nium* an*im*os nexu sibi magni amoris astrinx*er*at/ [MS, leaf 179.]

p. 416, l. 421. ¶ Sic Walter*us* humili quidem set insigni ac p*ro*sp*er*o matrimonio honestatis su*m*ma dei in pace &*cetera*. [MS, leaf 179, back.]

p. 416, l. 425. ¶ Q*uo*dq*ue* eximia*m* virtute*m* tanta sub inopia latitante*m* tam p*er*spicacit*er* dep*re*ndisset vulgo prudentissim*us* habebat*ur*. [MS, leaf 179, back.]

SIDE-NOTES TO THE CLERK'S TALE. **Hengwrt MS.**

p. 416, l. 428. Neq*ue* *ver*o solers sponsa muliebria *tantum* ac domestica / set vbi res posceret publica eci*am* subibat officia. [MS, leaf 179, back.]

p. 417, l. 435. ¶ viro absente lites p*atr*ie / nobilium discordias dirimens atq*ue* *com*ponens tam *gra*uib*us* responsis / tantaq*ue* maturitate & Iudicij equitate vt omn*es* ad salute*m* publica*m* demissa*m* celo fem*in*am p*re*dicarent. [MS, leaf 179, back.]

p. 417, l. 449. ¶ cep*it* [ut fit int*er*dum Walterum cu*m*] iam [ablactata esset infantula] mirabilis q[uedam q*uam* laudabilis] cupiditas sat[*is* expertam care fidem] co*n*iugis exp*er*ien[di alcius & it*er*um] atq*ue* it*er*um retem[ptandi]. [MS, leaf 180.]

p. 422, l. 603. ¶ Par alacritas atq*ue* sedalitas solitu*m* obsequiu*m*/ idem amor nulla filie mencio. [MS, leaf 182.]

p. 422, l. 610. ¶ *tra*nsiue*r*ant hoc/ in statu anni .4. dum ecce grauida &*cetera*. [MS, leaf 182.]

p. 423, l. 624. ¶ Et olim ait audisti populu*m* meu*m* egre nostrum ferre connubiu*m* &*cetera*. [MS, leaf 182, back.]

p. 424, l. 659. ¶ ffac sen[ten]ciam tibi placere q*uod* moriar volens moriar. [MS, leaf 183.]

p. 426, l. 722. ¶ cep*er*it sensi[m de Waltero] decolor fama [crebrescere.] [MS, leaf 184.]

p. 436, l. 1037. vnu*m* bona fide p*re*cor ac moneo / ne hanc/ illis aculeis agites / quib*us* alte*r*am agitasti namq*ue* & iunior & delicacius nutrita est/ pati quantu*m* ego vt reor non valeret/ [MS, leaf 188, back.]

p. 439, l. 1142. ¶ hanc historia*m* stilo nu*n*c alto retexere vis[um fuit] non tu*m* ideo / vt matronas no*str*i temporis [ad] imitandam huiu*s* vxo*r*is pacienciam que mich[i] inimitabilis videt*ur* / quam vt legentes ad imitandam saltem fem*in*e constancia*m* excitarentur

¶ vt q*ue* hec viro suo p*re*stitit/ hoc p*re*stare deo no*str*o audeat quilibet/ vt Iacobus ait Apo*st*olus/ / Intemptator sit malor*um* & ipse nem*in*em temptat/ p*ro*bat tam*en* et sepe nos multis ac *gra*uib*us* flagellis excerceri sinit / non vt animu*m* no*str*um sciat/ quem sciuit antequ*am* crearem*ur* &*cetera*. [MS, leaf 190.]

GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

§ 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ The *Pro*hemie of the Clerkys tale of Oxenford

[leaf 173, back]

SIre clerk of Oxenford / oure hoost sayde
Ye ride as coy / and stille as dooth a mayde
Were newe spoused / sittyng at the bord
This day ne herde I / of youre tonge a word
I trowe ye studie / aboute som Sophyme
But Salomon seith / euery thyng hath tyme
¶ ffor goddes sake / as beth of bettre cheere
It is no tyme / for to studien heere
Tel vs som murie tale / by youre fey
ffor what man / that is entred in a pley
He nedes moot/ vn-to the pley assente
But *pre*cheth nat/ as freres doon in lente
To maken vs / for oure olde synnes wepe
Ne that thy tale / make vs nat to slepe
¶ Tel vs / som murye thyng of auentures
Youre *ter*mes / youre colours / and youre figures
Kepe hem in stoor / til so be ye endite
Heigh stile / as whan *þat* men to kynges write
Speketh so pleyn at this tyme / we yow preye
That we may vnderstonde / what ye seye
¶ This worthy clerk/ benygnely answerde
Hoost quod he / I am vnder youre yerde
Ye han of vs / as now the gou*er*nañce
And therfore / wol I do yow obeisañce

As fer / as reson asketh hardily
I wol yow telle a tale / which that I
Lerned at Padwe / of a worthy Clerk'
As proued / by his wordes and his werk'
He is now deed / and nayled in his Cheste
I pray to god / so yeue his soule reste
¶ ffraunceys Petrak' the lauryat poete
Highte this clerk' whos Rethoryk swete
Enlumyned al Ytaille / of Poetrie
As Lynyan dide / of Philosophie
Or lawe / or oother art *p*articuler
But deth / þat wol nat suffre vs dwellen her
But as it were / a twynklyng of an eye [leaf 174]
Hem bothe hath slayn / and alle shul we dye
¶ But forth to tellen / of this worthy man
That taughte me this tale / as I bigan
I seye þat first' with heigh stile he enditeth
Er he / the body of his tale writeth
A prohemie / in which discryueth he
Pemond / and of Saluces the contree [*Latin note*, p. 402]
And speketh of Appenyn / the hilles hye
That been the boundes / of west lumbardye
And of Mouut Vesulus / in special
Wher as the Poo / out of a welle smal
Taketh his firste spryngyng / and his cours
That Estward / ay encresseth in his cours
To Emeleward / to fferare / and Venyse
The which / a long thyng were to deuyse
And trewely / as to my Iuggement'
Me thynketh it' a thyng inp*er*tinent'
Saue þat he wole / conveien his matere
But this his tale / which þat ye shal heere

¶ Here bigynneth the tale ☙

Ther is / at the west syde of Ytaille
Doun at the roote / of Vesulus the colde [*Latin note, p. 402*]
A lusty playne / habundant of vitaille ¶ grata planicies
Wher many a tour and town / thow mayst biholde
That founded were / in tyme of fadres olde
And many another / delitable sighte
And Saluces / this noble contree highte

¶ A Markys whilom / lord was of that lond
As were his worthy eldres hym bifore
And obeysant ay redy to his hond
Were alle his liges / bothe lasse and moore
Thus in delit he lyueth / and hath doon yoore
Biloued and drad / thurgh fauour of ffortune
Bothe of his lordes / and of his commune

[Th[1]]er with he was / to speke as of lynage [[1] *Rats.* If 174, bk]
The gentileste / yborn of Lumbardye
A fair persone / and strong and yong of age
And ful of honour / and of curteisye
Discret ynogh / his contree for to gye
Saue in some thynges / þat he was to blame
And Walter / was this yonge lordes name

¶ I blame hym thus / that he considered noght
In tyme comynge / what myghte hym bityde
But on his lust present was al his thoght
As for to hauke / and hunte on euery syde
Wel neigh / alle oothere cures leet he slyde
And eek he nolde / and that was worst of alle
Wedde no wyf/ for noght þat may bifalle

¶ Oonly that point' his peple bar so soore
That flokmele on a day / they to hym wente — *cateruatim.*
And oon of hem / þat wisest was of loore
Or ellis / þat the lord / best wolde assente
That he sholde telle hym / what his peple mente
Or ellis koude he / shewe wel swich matere
He to the Markys seyde / as ye shal heere

¶ O noble Markys / youre humanitee — *// tua inquid humanitas optime Marchio*
Assureth vs / and yeueth vs hardynesse
As ofte / as tyme is of necessitee
That we to yow / mowe telle oure heuynesse
Accepteth lord / now of youre gentillesse
That we with pitous herte / vn to yow pleyne
And lat youre erys / noght my voys disdeyne

¶ Al haue I noght to doone / in this matere
Moore than another man / hath in this place
Yet for as muche / as ye my lord so deere
Han alwey shewed me / fauour and grace
I dar the bettre / aske of yow a space
Of audience / to shewen oure requeste
And ye my lord / to doon right as yow leste

¶ ffor certes lord so wel vs liketh yow — [leaf 173]
And al youre werk' and euere han doon / þat we
Ne koudon nat vs self / deuysen how
We myghte lyuen / in moore felicitee
Saue o thyng lord / if it youre wille be
That for to been a wedded man / yow leste
Thanne were youre peple / in souereyn hertes reste

¶ Boweth youre nekke / vnder that blisful yok'
Of souereyntee / noght of seruyse
Which that men clepe / spousaille / or wedlok'
And thenketh lord / among youre thoghtes wise

How þat oure dayes passe / in sondry wyse
ffor thogh we slepe / or wake / or renne / or ryde
Ay fleeth the tyme / it nel no man abyde

¶ And thogh youre grene youthe / floure as yit'
In crepeth age alwey / as stille as stoon
And deth / manaceth euery age and smyt'
In ech estat' for ther escapeth noon
And also certeyn / as we knowe echon
That we shal dye / as vncerteyn we alle
Been of that day / whan deth shal on vs falle

¶ Accepteth thanne of vs / the trewe entente
That neuere yet' refuseden thyn heste
And we wol lord / if þat ye wol assente
Chese yow a wyf/ in short tyme at the leeste
Born of the gentileste / and of the meeste
Of al this lond / so þat it oghte seme
Honour / to god and yow / as we kan deme

¶ Delyuere vs / out of al this bisy drede
And tak a wyf / for heighe goddes sake
ffor if so bifelle / as god forbede
That thurgh youre deeth / youre ligne sholde slake
And that a straunge Successour / sholde take
Youre heritage / o. wo were vs alyue
Wher fore / we pray yow / hastily to wyue

[Hir[1]] meke prayere / and hir pitous cheere [1 *Rats.* lf 175, bk]
Made the Markys herte / han pitee
Ye wol quod he / myn owene pèple deere
To that I neuere erst thoghte / streyne me
I me reioysed / of my libertee
That selde tyme / is founde in mariage
Ther I was free / I moot ben in seruage

¶ But nathelees / I se youre trewe entente
And truste vp on youre wit' and haue doon ay
Wher fore / of my free wyl / I wol assente
To wedde me / as soone as euere I may
But ther as ye / han profred me to day
To chese me a wyf/ I yow relesse
That choys / and pray yow of that profre cesse

¶ ffor god it woot' þat children ofte ben
Vnlyk/ hir worthy eldres hem bifore
Bountee comth al of god / nat of the stren
Of which / they been engendred and ybore
I triste in goddes bountee / and ther fore
My mariage / and myn estat and reste
I hym bitake / he may doon as hym leste

¶ Lat me allone / in chesyng of my wyf
That charge vp on my bak' I wol endure
But I pray yow / and charge vp on youre lyf
That what wyf þat I take / ye me assure
To worshipe hire / whil þat hir lyf may dure
In word and werk/ bothe here and euerywhere
As she / an Emperours doghter were

¶ And ferther moore / this shal ye swere / þat ye
Agayn my choys / shal neither grucche ne stryue
ffor sith / I shal forgoon my libertee
At your requeste / as euere mote I thryue
Ther as myn herte is set/ ther wol I wyue
And but ye wol assente / in swich manere
I pray yow / speketh namoore of this matere

¶ With hertly wyl / they sworen and assenten [leaf 176]
To al this thyng' ther seyde no wight nay
Bisekynge hym of grace / er þat they wenten
That he wolde / graunten hem a certein day

Of his spousaille / as soone as euere I may
ffor yet alwey / the peple som what dredde
Lest that the Markys / no wyf wolde wedde 182

¶ He graunted hem a day / swich as hym leste 183
On which / he wolde be wedded sikerly
And seyde / he dide al this at hir requeste
And they / with humble entente buxomly 186
Knelynge vp on hir knees / ful reuerently
Hym thanken alle / and thus they han an ende
Of hir entente / and hom agayn they wende 189

And her vp on / he to his officers 190
Comaundeth / for the feste to purueye
And to his pryuee knyghtes and Squyers
Swich charge yaf / as hym liste on hem leye 193
And they / to his comandement obeye
And ech of hem / dooth al his diligence
To doon / vn-to the feste reuerence 196

¶ Explicit prima pars ☙

¶ Incipit pars secunda ❧

NOght fer / fro thilke paleys honurable 197
Wher as this Markys / shoope his mariage
Ther stood a Throope / of site delitable
In which þat poure folk / of that village 200
Hadden hir bestes / and hir herbergage
And of hir labour / token hir sustenance
After that the erthe / yaf hem habundance 203

[A1]mong this poure folk / ther dwelte a man [1 *Rats.* If 176, bk]
Which þat was holden / pourest of hem alle
But heighe god / som tyme senden kan
His grace / in to a litel Oxes Stalle 207
Ianicula / men of that Throope hym calle
A doghter hadde he / fair ynogh to sighte
And Grisildis / this yonge mayden highte 210

¶ But for to speke / of vertuous beautee 211
Thanne was she / oon the faireste vnder the sonne
ffor poureliche / yfostred vp was she
No likerous lust' was thurgh hir herte yronne 214
Wel ofter of the welle / than of the tonne
She drank' and for she wolde vertu plese
She knew wel labour / but noon ydel ese 217

¶ But thogh this mayde / tendre were of age 218
Yet in the brest' of hir virginitee
Ther was enclosed / rype and sad corage
And in gret reuerence / and charitee 221
Hir olde poure fader / fostred she
A fewe sheepe / spynnynge / on feld she kepte
She wolde noght been ydel / til she slepte 224

¶ And whan she homward cam / she wolde brynge 225
Wortes / or othere herbes / tymes ofte
The whiche she shredde / and seeth for his lyuynge
And made hir bed ful harde / and no thyng softe 228
And ay she kepte / hir fadres lyf on lofte
With euery obeysance / and diligence
That child may doon / to fadres reuerence 231

¶ Vp on Grisilde / this poure creature 232
fful ofte sithe / this Markys sette his eye
And he / on huntyng rood per auenture
And whan it fil / þat he myghte hire espie 235
He noght' wit wantowne lookyng of folye
Hise eyen caste on hire / but in sad wyse
Vp on hir cheere / he wolde hym ofte auyse 238

¶ Commendynge in his herte / hir wommanhede [leaf 177]
And eek hir vertu / passyng any wight'
Of so yong age / as wel in cheere as dede
ffor thogh the peple / hath no greet insight' 242

In·ver·tue / he considered ful right
Hir bountee / and disposed þat he wolde
Wedde hire oonly / if euere he wedden sholde

¶ The day of weddyng cam / but no wight kan
Telle what womman / þat it sholde be
ffor which merueille / wondred many a man
And seyden / whan they were·in priuetee
Wol nat oure lord / yet leue his vanytee
Wol he nat wedde / allas the while
Why wol he thus / hym self and vs bigyle

¶ But nathelees / this Markys hath doon make
Of gemmes / set in gold and in Asure
Broches and rynges / for Grisildis sake
And of hir clothyng took he the mesure
Of a mayde / lyk to hir stature
And eek of othere / aournementes alle
That vn-to swich a weddyng sholde falle

¶ The tyme of vndren / of the same day
Approcheth / þat this weddyng sholde be
And al the palays / put was in array
Bothe halle and chambres / ech in his degree
Houses of office / stuffed with plentee
Ther maystow seen / of deynteuous vitaille
That may be founde / as fer as last Ytaille

¶ This Roial Markys / richeliche arrayed
Lordes and ladys / in his compaignye
The whiche / þat to the feste were yprayed
And of his retenue / the Bachilrye
With many a sown / of sondry melodye
Vn to the village / of the which I tolde
In this array / the righte wey han holde

[Gri^{l}]silde of this / god woot ful Innocent' [¶ *Rats.* leaf 177, back]
[T^{l}]hat for hire shapen was / al this array
To fecchen water / at a welle / is went'
And cometh hom / as soone as euer she may
ffor wel she hadde herd seyd / þat thilke day
The Markys sholde wedde / and if she myghte
She wolde fayn han seyn / som of that sighte

¶ She thoghte / I wole with̄ othere maydens stonde
That beeñ my felawes / in oure dore and se [*Latin note*, p. 402]
The Markisesse / and therfore wol I fonde
To doon at hom / as soone as it may be
The labour / which þat longeth vn to me
And thanne I may / at leyser hir biholde
Yf she this wey / vn to the Castel holde

¶ And as she wolde / ouer the̅ thresshfold gon
The Markys cam / and gan hire for to calle
And she sette doun / hir water pot anon
Bisyde̅ the thresshfold / in an Oxes Stalle
And doun vp on hir knees / she gan to falle
And with sad contenance / kneleth stille
Til she hadde herd / what was the lordes wille

¶ This thoghtful Markys / spak vn to this mayde [*Latin note*, p. 402]
fful sobrely / and seyde in this manere
Where is youre fader / o. Grisildis he sayde
And she with reuerence / in humble cheere
Answerde / lord he is al redy heere
And she goth / with outen lenger lette
And to the Markys / she hir fader fette

¶ He by the hand / than took this olde man
And seyde thus / whan he hym hadde asyde
Ianicula / I neither may ne kan
Lenger / the plesance of myn herte hyde

If that thow vouche sauf / what so bityde
Thy doghter wol I take / er that I wende
As for my wyf/ vn to my lyues ende

¶ Thow louest me / I woot it wel certeyn [leaf 178]
And art' my feithful lige man ybore
And al that liketh me / I dar wel seyn
It liketh thee / and specially ther fore
Tel me that point/ that I haue seyd bifore
If that thow wolt' vn to that purpos drawe
To take me / as for thy sone in lawe

¶ The sodeyn cas / this man astoneyd so
That reed he weex abayst' and al quakyng'
He stood / vnnethe seyde he wordes mo
But oonly this / lord quod he / my willyng'
Is as ye wole / ne ayeins youre likyng'
I wol no thyng' ye be my lord so deere
Right as yow list/ gouerneth this matere

¶ Yet wol I / quod this Markys / softely
That in thy chambre / .I. and thow. and she
Haue a collacioñ / and wostow why
ffor .I wol aske / if it hir wille be
To be my wyf / and rule hire after me
And al this shal be doon / in thy presence
I wol noght speke / out of thyn audience

¶ And in the chambre / whil they were aboute
Hir tretys / which as ye shal after heere
The peple cam / vn to the hous with oute
And wondred hem / in how honeste manere
And tentifly / she kepte hir fader deere
But outrely / Grisildis wondre myghte
ffor neuere eft' ne saw she swich a sighte

¶ No wonder is / thogh þat she were astoned [Latin note, p. 402]
To seen so greet a gest' come in to place
She neuere was / to swiche gestes woned
ffor which she looked / with ful pale face
But shortly / forth this matere for to chace
Thise arn the wordes / þat this Markys sayde
To this benygne / verray feithful mayde

[Gri[1]]silde he seyde / ye shal wel vnderstonde [[1] Rats. lf 178, bk] [Latin note, p. 402]
It liketh youre fader / and to me
That I yow wedde / and eek it may so stonde
As I suppose / ye wol þat it so be
But thise demandes / aske I first quod he
That sith it shal be doon / in hastif wyse
Wol ye assente / or ellis yow auyse

¶ I sey this / be ye redy / with good herte
To al my lust' and þat I frely may
As me best thynketh / do yow laughe or smeerte
And neuere ye to grucche it/ nyght ne day
And eek whan I sey ye / ne sey nat nay
Neither by word / ne frownyng contenance [Latin note, p. 402]
Swere this / and heere I swere oure alliance

¶ Wondrynge vp on this word / quakyng for drede [Latin note, p. 402]
She seyde lord / vndigne / or vnworthy
I am / to thilke honour / þat ye me bede
But as ye wol your self/ right so wol I
And heere I swere / that neuere willyngly
In werk ne thoght' I nel yow disobeye
ffor to be deed / thogh me were looth to deye

¶ This is ynough / Grisilde myn quod he
And forth he goth / with a ful sobre cheere
Out at the dore / and after that cam she
And to the peple / he seyde in this manere

This is my wyf quod he / that standeth heere
Honureth hire / and loueth hire I preye
Who so me loueth / there is namoore to seye

¶ And for þat no thyng of hir olde gere [*Latin note, p. 402*]
She sholde brynge in to his hous / he bad
That wommen / sholde dispoyleu hir right there
Of which / thise ladys / were noght right glad
To handle hir clothes / wher Inne she was clad
But nathelees / this mayde bright of hewe
ffro foot to heed / they clothed han al newe

¶ Hir herys han they kembd / that laye vntressed [leaf 179]
fful rudely / and with hir fyngres smale
A coroune on hir heed / they han ydressed
And sette hire ful Nowches grete and smale
Of hir array / what sholde I make a tale
Vnnethe the peple hir knew / for hir fairnesse
Whan she translated was / in swich richesse

¶ This Markys / hath hire spoused with a ryng
Broght for the same cause / and thanne hir sette
Vp on an hors snow whyt and wel amblyng
And to his palays / er he lenger lette
With ioyful peple / þat hir ledde and mette
Convoied hire / and thus / the day they spende
In reuel / til the sonne gan descende

¶ And shortly / forth this tale for to chace
I seye / þat to this newe Markysesse
God hath / swich fauour sent hire of his grace
That it ne semed nat by liklynesse
That she / was born and fed in rudenesse
As in a cote / or in an Oxes Stalle
But norissed / in an Emperours halle

¶ To eu*e*ry wight' she woxen is so deere [*Latin note*, p. 402] 400
And worshipful / þ*at* folk' ther she was bor*e*
That from hir burthe / knewe hir*e* yeer by yeere
Vnnethe trowed they / but dorste han swore 403
That to Ianicle / of which I spak bifore
She doghter were / for as by coniecture
Hem thoughte / she was another creature 406

¶ ffor thogh þ*at* eu*e*re / v*er*tuous was she 407
She was encressed / in swich excellence
Of thewes goode / yset in heigh bou*n*tee
And so discreet' and fair of eloquence 410
So benygne / and so digne of reu*e*rence
And koude so / the peples herte embrace
That ech hir louede / that looked on hir face 413

[N']oght oonly / of Saluce in the town [1 *Rats.* leaf 179, back]
Publissed was / the bo*u*ntee of hir name
But eek bisyde / in many a Regioun
If oon seyde wel / another seyde the same 417
So spradde / of hir heighe bo*u*ntee the fame
That men and wommen / as wel yonge as olde
Goon to Saluce / on hir*e* to biholde 120

¶ Thus Walter lowely / nay but roially [*Latin note*, p. 402] 421
Wedded / with fortunat honestetee
In goddes pees / lyueth ful esily
At hom / and outward grace ynow hath he 424
And for he saugh / þ*at* vnder lowe degree [*Latin note*, p. 402]
Was ofte vertu hyd / the peple hym helde
A prudent man / and that is seyn ful selde 427

¶ Noght oonly / this Grisildis / thurgh hir wit [*Latin note*, p. 402]
Koude al the feet' of wifly humblenesse
But eek' whan þ*at* the cas required it
The co*m*mune p*ro*fit' koude she redresse 431

Ther nas discord / rancour / ne heuynesse
In al that land / þat she ne koude apese
And wisly / brynge hem alle in reste and ese 434

¶ Thogh þat hir housbond absent were / anon [Latin note, p. 402]
If gentil men / or othere of hir contree
Were wrothe / she wolde bryngen hem aton
So wise / and rype wordes hadde she 438
And Iuggementz / of so greet equytee
That she from heuene sent was / as men wende
Peple to saue / and euery wrong tamende 441

¶ Nat longe tyme after that this Grisild 442
Was ywedded / she a doghter hath ybore
Al hadde hir leuere / haue had a knaue child
Glad was the Markys / and the folk ther fore 445
ffor thogh a mayde child / coome al bifore
She may / vn to a knaue child atteyne
By liklyhede / syn she nys nat bareyne 448

Explicit secunda pars ☙

Incipit/ pars tercia.

THer fil / as it bifalleth tymes mo [leaf 180] [Latin note, p. 402]
Whan þat this child / hath souked but a throwe
This Markys / in his herte longeth so
To tempte his wyf/ hir sadnesse for to knowe 452
That he ne myghte / out of his herte throwe
This merueilous desir / his wyf tassaye
Nedelees god woot he thoghte hire for tafraye 455

¶ He hadde assayed hire / ynow bifore 456
And fond hir euere good / what neded it
Hir for to tempte / and alwey moore & moore
Thogh som men preyse it for a subtil wit 459
But as for me / I seye þat yuele it sit
Tassaye a wyf / whan þat it is no nede
And putten hire / in angwyssh and in drede 462

ffor which / this Markys / wroghte in this manere
He cam allone a nyght ther as she lay
With steerne face / and with ful trouble cheere
And seyde thus / Grisilde quod he that day
That I yow took out of youre poure array
And putte yow in estat of heigh noblesse
Ye haue nat that forgeten as I gesse

¶ I seye Grisilde / this present dignitee
In which þat I haue put yow / as I trowe
Maketh yow / nat foryetful for to be
That I yow took in poure estat ful lowe
ffor any wele / ye moten nedes knowe
Tak hede of euery word / þat I yow seye
Ther is no wight þat hereth it but we tweye

¶ Ye woot your self wel / how þat ye cam heere
In to this hous / it is nat longe ago
And thogh to me / þat ye be lief and deere
Vn to my gentils / ye be no thyng so
They seyn / to hem / it is greet shame & wo
ffor to be subgitz / and been in seruage
To thee / that born art of a smal yillage

¶ [An']d namely / sith thy doghter was ybore [1 *Rats.* 180, back] leaf
Thise wordes / han they spoken doutelees
But I desire / as I haue doon bifore
To lyue my lyf *with* hem / in reste and pees
I may nat in this cas be recchelees
I moot doon *with* thy doghter / for the beste
Nat as I wolde / but as my peple leste

¶ And yet god woot this is ful looth to me
But nathelees / with outen youre wityng
I wol nat doon / but this wol I quod he
That ye to me assente / as in this thyng

Shewe now youre pacience / in youre wirkyng
That ye me highte / and swore in yone village
That day / þat maked was oure mariage 497

¶ Whan she hadde herd al this / she noght ameued 498
Neither in word / or cheere / or contenance Nec verbo mota / nec vultu.
ffor as it semed / she was nat agreued
She seyde lord / al lith in youre plesance 501
My child and I / with hertly obeisance
Been youres al / and ye mowe saue or spille
Youre owene thyng werketh after youre wille 504

¶ Ther may no thyng god so my soule saue 505
Liken to yow / þat may displesen me
Ne I ne desire / no thyng for to haue
Ne drede for to lese / saue oonly thee / vel ye 508
This wyl is in myn herte / and ay shal be
No lengthe of tyme / or deth may this deface
Ne chaunge my corage / to oother place 511

¶ Glad was this Markys / of hir answeryng 512
But yet he feyned / as he were nat so
Al drery was his cheere / and his lookyng
Whan þat he sholde / out of the chambre go 515
Soone after this / a furlang wey or two
He pryuely / hath told al his entente
Vn to a man / and to his wyf hym sente 518

¶ A maner sergeant / was this priuee man [leaf 181] 519
The which þat feithful ofte / he founden hadde
In thynges grete / and eek swich folk wel kan
Doon execucion / in thynges badde 522
Tho lord knew wel / that he [hy]m loued and dradde
And whan this sergeant wiste his lordes wille
In to the chambre / he stalked hym ful stille 525

¶ Madame he seyde / ye mote foryeue it me
Thogh I do thyng to which I am constreyned
Ye ben so wys / þat ful wel knowe ye
That lordes hestes / mowe nat ben ẏfeyned
They mowe wel been / biwailled / or compleyned
But men mote nede / vn to hir lust obeye
And so wol I / ther is namoore to seye

¶ This child / I am comaunded for to take
And spak namoore / but out the child he hente
Despitously / and gan a cheere make
As thogh he wolde / han slayn it er he wente
Grisildis moot al suffre / and al consente
And as a lamb / she sitteth meke and stille
And leet this crewel sergeant doon his wille

¶ Suspecious was / the diffame of this man ¶ Suspecta viri fama.
Suspect his face / suspect his word also ¶ Suspecta facies.
Suspect / the tyme / in which he this bigan ¶ Suspecta hora. ¶ Suspecta erat oracio.
Allas hir doghter / þat she loued so
She wende / he wolde / han slayn it right tho
But natheles / she neither weepe ne syked
Conformynge hire / to that the Markys liked

¶ But at the laste / speken she bigan
And mekely / she to the sergeant preyde
So as he was / a worthy gentil man
That she moste kisse hir child / er þat it deyde
And on hir barm / this litel child she leyde
With ful sad face / and gan the child to blesse
And lulled it and after gan it kesse

¶ [A¹]nd thus she seyde / in hir benygne voys [¹ *Rats.* 181, back] leaf
ffare wel my child / I shal thee neuere see
But sith I thee / haue marked with the croys
Of thilke fader / blessed mote he be

That for vs deyde / vp on a croys of tree
Thy soule litel child / I hym bitake
ffor this nyght' shaltow dyen for my sake'

¶ I trowe / that to a Norice in this cas
It hadde been hard / this routhe for to se
Wel myghte a moder / haue cryd allas
But nathelees / so sad stedefast was she
That she endured / al aduersitee
And to the Sergeant' mekely she sayde
Haue here agayn / youre litel yonge mayde

¶ Goth now quod she / and doth my lordes heste
But o thyng' wol I pray yow / of youre grace
That but my lord / forbad yow at the leeste
Burieth this litel body / in som place
That bestes / ne no bryddes / it to-race
But he no word / wol to that purpos seye
But took the child / and wente vp on his weye

¶ This sergeant' cam / vn to his lord agayn
And of Grisildis wordes / and hir cheere
He tolde hym poynt for poynt' in short and playn
And hym presenteth / with his doghter deere
Som what this lord / hadde routhe in his manere
But nathelees / his purpos held he stille
As lordes doon / whan they wol han hir wille

¶ And bad this Sergeant' þat he pryuely
Sholde this child / softe wynde and wrappe
With alle circumstances tendrely
And carie it in a cofre / or in a lappe
But vp on peyne / his heed of for to swappe
That no man sholde knowe / of this entente
Ne whennes he cam / ne whider þat he wente

¶ But at Boloigne / he to his suster deere [leaf 182]
That thilke tyme / of Pauyk was Countesse
He sholde it take / and shewe hire this matere
Biskynge hire / to doon hir bisynesse
This child to fostre / in alle gentilesse
And whos child þat it was / he bad hire hyde
ffrom euery wight for aught þat may bityde

¶ The Sergeant goth / and hath fulfild this thyng
But to this Markys / now retourne we
ffor now goth he / ful faste ymagynyng
If by his wyues cheere / he myghte se
Or by hir word aparceyue / that she
Were chaunged / but he neuere hir koude fynde
But euere in oon / ylike sad and kynde

¶ As glad / as humble / as busy in seruyse [*Latin note*, p. 402]
And eek in loue / as she was wont to be
Was she to hym / in euery maner wise
Ne of hir doghter / noght a word spak she
Noon accident for noon aduersitee
Was seyn in hire / ne neuere hir doghter name
Ne nempned she / in ernest ne in game

¶ Explicit tercia pars ☙

¶ Incipit pars quarta ☙

IN this estat ther passed ben .4. yeer [*Latin note*, p. 402]
Er she with childe was / but as god wolde
A knaue child she bar / by this Walter
fful gracious / and fair for to biholde
And whan þat folk / it to his fader tolde
Nat oonly he / but al his contre merye
Was for this child / and god they thanke and herye

¶ Whan it was two yeer old / and fro the brest [leaf 182, back]
Departed of his Norice / on a day
This Markys / caughte yet another lest

To tempte his wyf / yet ofter / if he may
O nedelees / was she tempted in assay
But wedded men / ne knowe no mesure
Whan þat they fynde / a pacient creature

¶ Wyf quod this Markys / ye han herd er this [*Latin note, p. 402*]
My peple / sikly berth this mariage
And namely / sith my sone yborn is
Now is it worse / than euere in al oure age
The murmur sleeth myn herte / and my corage
ffor to myne erys / comth the voys so smerte
That it wel neigh / destroyed hath myn herte

¶ Now sey they thus / whan Walter is agon
Thanne shal / the blood of Ianycle succede
And been oure lord / for oother haue we noon
Swiche wordes / seith my peple out of drede
Wel oghte I / of swich murmur taken hede
ffor certeinly / I drede swich sentence
Though they nat pleyn / speke in myn audience

¶ I wolde lyue in pees / if þat I myghte
Wherfore / I am disposed outrely
As I his suster / serued by nyghte
Right so thenke I / to serue hym priuely
This warne I yow / þat ye nat sodeynly
Out of your self / for no wo sholde outraye
Beth pacient and ther of I yow praye

¶ I haue quod she seyd thus / and euere shal
I wol no thyng ne nyl no thyng certeyn
But as yow list noght greueth me at al
Thogh that my doghter / and my sone be sleyn
At youre comandement this is to seyn
I haue nat had no part of children tweyne
But first siknesse / and after wo and peyne

¶ Ye ben oure lord / dooth *with* youre owene thyng' [leaf 183]
Right as yow list' axeth no reed of me
ffor as I lefte at hom / al my clothyng'
Whan I first cam to yow / right so quod she
Lefte I my wyl / and al my libertee
And took youre clothyng/ wherfore I yow preye
Dooth youre plesance / I wol youre lust obeye

¶ And *certes* / if I hadde prescience [*Latin note*, p. 402]
Youre wyl to knowe / er ye youre lust me tolde
I wolde it doon / with outen necligence
But now I woot youre lust/ and what ye wolde
Al youre plesance / ferm and stable I holde
ffor wiste I / þat my deeth / wolde doon yow ese
Right gladly wolde I dyen / yow to plese

¶ Deeth may nat make / no comparisoun
Vn-to your love And whan this Marqys say
The constance of hys wyf / he caste adoun
Hise eyen two / and wondreth þat she may
In pacience / suffre al this array
And forth he goth / with drery contenance
But to his herte / it was ful gret plesance

¶ This vggly *ser*geant' in the same wyse
That he hir doghter caughte / right so he
Or worse / if men worse kan deuyse
Hath hent hir sone / þat ful was of beautee
And euere in oon / so pacient was she
That she / no cheere made of heuynesse
But kiste hir sone / and after gan it blesse

¶ Saue this she prayde hym / þat if he myghte
Hir litel sone / he wolde in erthe graue
His tendre lymes / delicat to sighte
ffro foweles / and fro bestes / hem to saue

But she noon answere / of hym myghte haue
He wente his wey / as hym no thyng roghte
But to Boloigne / he tendrely it broghte 686

[T¹]his Markys wondreth / euer lenger the moore [¹ *Rats.* 183, back] leaf
Vp on hir pacience / and if þat he
Ne hadde soothly / knowen ther bifoore
That *par*fitly / hir children loued she 690
He wolde haue wend / þat of som subtiltee
And of malice / or of cruel corage
That she hadde suffred this / with sad visage 693

¶ But wel he knew / þat next hym self *cer*tayn 694
She loued hir children best in euery wise
But now of wommen / wolde I asken fayn
If thise assayes / myghte nat suffise 697
What koude a sturdy housbond / moore deuyse
To proue hir wifhod / and hir stedfastnesse
And he contynuynge / eue*r*e in sturdynesse 700

¶ But ther ben folk / of swich condicioñ 701
That whan they haue / a certeyn purpos take
They kan nat stynte / of hir entencioñ
But right as they were bounden to that stake 704
They wol nat of that firste purpos slake
Right so this Markys / fulliche hath purposed
To tempte his wyf / as he was first disposed 707

¶ He wayteth / if by word / or contenance 708
That she to hym / was chaunged of corage
But neue*r*e / koude he fynde variance
She was ay oon / in herte and in visage 711
And ay the ferther / þat she was of age
The moore trewe / if þat were possible
She was to hym in loue / and moore penyble 714

¶ ffor which it semed thus / þat of hem two
Ther nas but o wyl / for as Walter leste
The same lust' was hir plesance also
And god be thanked / al fyl for the beste
She shewed wel / for no worldly vnreste
A wif' as of hir self' no thyng ne sholde
Wille in effect' but as hir housbond wolde

¶ The sclaundre of Walter / ofte and wyde spradde [leaf 184]
That of a cruel herte / he wikkedly [*Latin note*, p. 402]
ffor he / a poure womman / wedded hadde
Hath mordred / bothe his children pryuely
Swich murmur / was among hem comunly
No wonder is / for to the peples ere
Ther cam no word / but þat they mordred were

¶ ffor which / wher as his peple ther bifore
Hadde loued hym wel / the sclaundre of his diffame
Made hem / that they hym hated therfore
To ben a mordrere / is an hateful name
But natheles / for ernest' ne for game
He / of his cruel purpos nolde stente
To tempte his wyf / was set al his entente

¶ Whan that this doghter /.xij. yer was of age
He to the court of Rome / in subtil wise
Enformed of his wil / sente his message
Comaundynge hem / swiche bulles to deuyse
As to his cruel purpos / may suffise
How þat the pope / as for his peples reste
Bad hym to wedde / another if hym leste

¶ I seye / he bad they sholde contrefete
The popes bulles / makyng mencioñ
That he hath leue / his firste wyf to lete
As by the popes dispensacioñ

To stynte rancour / and dissencioñ
Bitwix his peple and hym / thus seyde the bulle
The which / they han publissed at the fulle

¶ The rude peple / as it no wonder is
Wenden ful wel / þat it hadde ben right so
But whan thise tidynges / cam to Grisildis
I deme / that hir herte was ful wo
But she / ylike sad for euere mo
Disposed was / this humble creature
Thaduersitee of ffortune / al tendure

¶ Abidynge euere / his lust and his plesance [leaf 181, back]
To whom þat she was yeuen / herte and al
As to hire / verray worldly suffisance
But shortly / if this storie I tellen shal
This Markys / writen hath in special
A lettre / in which / he sheweth his entente
And secrely / he to Boloigne it sente

¶ To the Erl of Pavyk' which þat hadde tho
Wedded his suster / prayde he specially
To bryngen hom agayn / his children two
In honurable estat' al openly
But o thyng' he hym prayde oütrely
That he to no wight' th[o]gh men wolde enquere
Sholde nat tellen / whos children þat they were

¶ But seye / the mayden sholde ywedded be
Vn to the Markys of Saluce / anon
And as this Erl was prayd / so dide he
ffor at day set' he on his wey is gon
Toward Saluce / and lordes many oon
In riche array / this mayden for to gyde
Hir yonge brother / ridyng hir bisyde

¶ Arrayed was / toward hir mariage
This fresshe mayde / ful of gemmes clere
Hir brother / which þat seuen yeer was of age
Arrayed eek' ful fressh in his manere
And thus in gret noblesse / and with glad cheere
Toward Saluces / shapyng hir iourney
ffro day to day / they ryden in hir wey

¶ Explicit quarta pars ☙

¶ Incipit' pars qinta / ¶ The Cler[kes Tale] [leaf 185]

Among al this / after his wikke vsage
This Markys yet' his wif to tempte moore
To the outreste preue / of hir corage
ffully to han / experience and loore
If that she were / as stedefast as bifore
He on a day / in open audience
fful boystously / hath seyd hire this sentence

¶ Certes Grisilde / I hadde ynogh plesance
To han yow to my wyf / for youre goodnesse
And for youre trouthe / and for youre obeysance
Noght for youre lynage / ne for youre richesse
But now knowe I / in verray sothfastnesse
That in gret lordshipe / if I wel auyse
Ther is gret seruitute / in sondry wyse

¶ I may nat do / as euery Plowman may
My peple / me constreyneth for to take
Another wyf / and cryen day by day
And eek the pope / rancour for to slake
Consenteth it' that dar I vndertake
And trewely / thus muche I wol yow seye
My newe wif / is comynge by the weye

¶ Be strong of herte / and voyde anon hir place
And thilke dowere / þat ye broghten me
Tak it agayn / I graunte it of my grace

Retourneth / to youre fadres hous quod he
No man may / alwey han *prosperitee*
With euene herte / I rede yow tendure
The strook / of ffortune / or of auenture

¶ And she agayn / answerde in pacience
My lord quod she / I woot and wiste alway
How þat bitwixen / youre magnificence
And my pou*er*te / no wight kan ne may
Maken comparisoñ / it is no nay
I ne heeld me neu*er*e digne / in no manere
To be youre wyf/ no{ ne youre chambrere

And in this hous / ther ye me lady made [leaf 185, back]
The heighe god take I / for my witnesse
And also wisly / he my soule glade
I neu*er*e heeld me lady / ne maistresse
But humble seruant to youre worthynesse
And eu*er*e shal / whil þat my lyf may dure
Abouen / euery worldly creature

¶ That ye so longe / of youre benygnytee
Han holden me / in honour and nobleye
Where as I was / noght worthy for to be
That thonke I god and yow / to whom I preye
fforyelde it yow / ther is namoore to seye
Vn to my fader / gladly wol I wende
And with hym dwelle / vn to my lyues ende

¶ Ther I was fostred / of a child ful smal
Til I be deed / my lyf ther wol I lede
A wydewe clene / in body / herte / and al
ffor sith / I yaf to yow / my maydenhede
And am youre trewe wyf / it is no drede
God shilde / swich a lordes wyf to take
Another man / to housbond / or to make

¶ And of youre newe wyf / god of his grace
So graunte yow / wele and prosperitee
ffor I wol gladly / yelden hire my place
In which / þat I was blisful wont to be
ffor sith it liketh yow / my lord quod she
That whilom weren / al myn hertes reste
That I shal goon / I wol goon whan yow leste

¶ But ther as ye / me profre swich dowaire
As I first broghte / it is wel in my mynde
It were my wrecched clothes / no thyng faire
The whiche to me / were hard now for to fynde
O goode god / how gentil / and how kynde
Ye semed / by youre speche / and youre visage
The day / that maked was oure mariage

¶ But sooth is seyd / algate I fynde it trewe [leaf 186]
ffor in effect it proued is on me
Loue is noght old / as whan þat it is newe
But certes lord / for noon aduersitee
To dyen in this cas / it shal nat be
That euere in word or werk/ I shal repente
That I yow yaf myn herte / in hool entente

¶ My lord ye woot þat in my fadres place
Ye dide me strepe / out of my poure wede
And richely / me cladden of youre grace
To yow broghte I / noght ellis out of drede
But feith / and nakednesse / and maydenhede
And here agayn / my clothyng I restore
And eek my weddyngryng for euere moore

¶ The remenant of youre Iewels / redy be
In with youre chambre / dar I saufly sayn
Naked / out of my fadres hous quod she
I cam / and naked moot I turne agayn

Al youre plesance / wol I folwen fayn
But yet I hope / it be nat youre entente
That I smoklees / out of youre palays wente

¶ Ye koude nat doon / so dishoneste a thyng'
That thilke wombe / in which youre children leye
Sholde biforn the peple / in my walkyng'
Be seyn al bare / wher fore I yow preye
Lat me / nat lyk a worm / go by the weye
Remembre yow / myn owene lord so deere
I was youre wyf / thogh I vnworthy weere

¶ Wher fore / in gerdon of my maydenhede
Which þat I broghte / and noght agayn I bere
As voucheth sauf' to yeue me to my mede
But swich a smok' as I was wont to were
That I ther with / may wrye the wombe of here
That was youre wyf / and here take I my leeue
Of yow myn owene lord / lest I yow greeue

¶ The smok quod he / that thow hast on thy bak/ [lf 186, bk]
Lat it be stille / and bere it forth with thee
But wel vnnethes / thilke word he spak'
But wente his wey / for routhe and for pitee
Biforn the folk/ hir seluen strepeth shee
And in hir smok/ with heued & feet al bare
Toward hir fader hous / forth is she fare

¶ The folk hir folwen / wepynge in hir weye
And ffortune / ay they cursen as they goon
But she fro wepyng' kepte hir eyen dreye
Ne in this tyme / word ne spak she noon
Hir fader / that this tidynge herde anon
Curseth the day and tyme./ þat nature
Shoope hym / to been a lyues creature

¶ ffor out of doute / this olde poure man
Was euere / in suspect' of hir mariage,
ffor euere he demed / sith þat it bigan
That whan the lord / fulfild hadde his corage
Hym wolde thynke / it were a dispárage
To his estat' so lowe for talighte
And voyden hire / as soone as euere he myghte

¶ Agayns his doghter / hastiliche goth he
ffor he by noyse of folk / knew hir comynge
And with hir olde cote / as it myghte be
He couered hire / ful sorwefully wepynge
But on hir body / myghte he it nat brynge
ffor rude was the clooth / and she moore of age
By dayes fele / than at hir mariage

¶ Thus with hir fader / for a certein space
Dwelleth this flour / of wifly pacience
That neyther / by hir wordes / ne hir face
Biforn the folk/ ne eek in hir absence
Ne shewed she / þat hir was doon offence
Ne of hir heighe estat' no remembrance
Ne hadde she / as by hir contenance

¶ No wonder is / for in hir grete estat' [leaf 187]
Hir goost was euere / in pleyn humylitee
No tendre mouth / noon herte delicat'
No pompe / no semblant of realtee
But ful / of pacient benygnytee
Discreet' and pridelees / ay honurable
And to hir housbonde / euere meke & stable

¶ Men speke of Iob / and moost' for his humblenesse
As clerkes whan hem lest' konne wel endite
Namely of men / but as in soothfastnesse
Thogh clerkes / preyse wommen but a lite

Ther kan no man / in humblesse hym acquite
As wommen kan / ne kan be half so trewe
As wommen been / but it be falle of newe 938

[*PART VI.*]

¶ ffro Boloigne / is this Erl of Pavyk come 939
Of which the fame vp sprong' to moore & lesse
And to the peples erys / alle and some
Was kouth eek/ þat a newe Markisesse 942
He *with* hym broghte / in swich pompe & richesse
That neuere was ther seyn / *with* mannes eye
So noble array / in al westlumbardye 945

¶ The Markys / which þat shoope / and knew al this 946
Er that this Erl was come / sente his message
ffor thilke / sely / poure Grisildis
And she with humble herte / and glad visage 949
Nat *with* no swollen thoght' in hir corage
Cam at his heste / and on hir knees hir sette
And reuerently / and wysly she hym grette 952

¶ Grisilde quod he / my wil is outrely 953
This mayden / þat shal wedded been to me
Receyued be tomorwe / as really
As it possible is / in myn hous to be 956
And eek/ that euery wight' in his degree
Haue his estat' in sittyng and seruyse
And heigh plesance / as I kan best deuyse 959

[I¹] haue no wommen suffisant *cer*tayn [¹ *Rats.* If 187, bk] 960
The chambres for taraye / in ordynance
After my lust' and ther fore wolde I fayn
That thyn were / al swich manere gouernance 963
Thow knowest eek of old al my plesance
Though thyn array be badde / and yuel biseye
Do thow thy deuoir / at the leeste weye 966

¶ Nat oonly lord / that I am glad / quod she
To doon youre lust' but I desire also
Yow for to serue / and plese in my degree
With outen feyntyng' and shal euere mo
Ne neuere / for no wele / ne no wo
Ne shal the goost' with Inne myn herte stente
To loue yow best' with al my trewe entente

¶ And with that word / she gan the hous to dighte
And tables for to sette / and beddes make
And peyned hire / to doon al that she myghte
Preyynge the chambreres / for goddes sake
To hasten hem / and faste swepe and shake
And she / the mooste seruysable of alle
Hath euery chambre arrayed / and his halle

¶ Abouten vndren / gan this Erl alighte
That with hym broghte / thise noble children tweye
ffor which the peple / ran to seen the sighte
Of hire array / so richely biseye
And thanne at erst/ amonges hem they seye
That Walter was no fool / thogh þat hym leste
To chaunge his wyf/ for it was for his beste

¶ ffor she is fairer / as they demen alle
Than is Grisilde / and moore tendre of age
And fairer fruyt' bitwene hem sholde falle
And moore plesant' for hire heigh lynage
Hir brother eek / so fair was of visage
That hem to seen / the peple hath caught plesance
Commendynge now / the Markys gouernance

¶ O. stormy peple / vnsad / and euere vntrewe [leaf 188]
Ay vndiscreet' and chaungyng' as a vane
Delitynge euere in rumbel / þat is newe
ffor lyk the moone / ay wexe ye and wane

Ay ful of clappỳng deere ynow a Iane
Youre doom is fals / youre constance yuele preueth
A ful greet fool is he / that on yow leueth 1001

¶ Thus seyden sadde folk/ in that Citee 1002
Whan that the peple / gazed vp and doun
ffor they were glad / right for the noueltee
To han / a newe lady / of hir town 1005
Namoore of this / make I now mencioun
But to Grisilde agayn / wol I me dresse
And telle hir constance / and hir bisynesse 1008

¶ fful bisy was Grisilde / in euery thyng 1009
That to the feste / was apertinent
Right noght was she abayst of hir clothyng
Thogh it were rude / and somdel eek to-rent 1012
But with glad cheere / to the yate is she went
With oother folk/ to greete the Markysesse
And after that/ dooth forth hir bisynesse 1015

¶ With so glad cheere / his gestes she receyueth 1016
And so konnyngly / euerich in his degree
That no defaute / no man aparceyueth
But ay they wondren / what she myghte be 1019
That in so poure array / was for to se
And koude swich honour / and reuerence
And worthily / they preysen hir prudence 1022

¶ In al this mene while / she ne stente 1023
This mayde / and eek hir brother to commende
With al hir herte / in ful benygne entente
So wel / þat no man koude hir prys amende 1026
But at the laste / whan þat thise lordes wende
To sitten doun to mete / he gan to calle
Grisilde / as she was bisy in his halle 1029

¶ Grisilde quod he / as it were in his pley [leaf 188, back]
How liketh thee my wyf / and hir beautee
Right wel quod she my lord / for in good fey
A fairer / saw I neuere noon / than she
I prey to god / yeue hire *prosperitee*
And so hope I / þat he wol to yow sende
Plesance ynough / vn to youre lyues ende

¶ O thyng' biseke I yow / and warne also [*Latin note*, p. 402]
That ye ne prike / with no tormentynge
This tendre mayden / as ye han do mo
ffor she is fostred / in hir norissynge
Moore tendrely / and to my supposynge
She koude nat' aduersitee endure
As koude / a poure fostred creature

¶ And whan this Walter / saw hir pacience
Hir glad cheere / and no malice at al
And he so ofte / had doon to hire offence
And she ay sad / and constant as a wal
Continuynge euere / hir Innocence ouer al (vbique.)
This sturdy Markys / gan his herte dresse
To rewen / vp on hir wyfly stedfastnesse

¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he
Be now namoore agast' ne yuele apayed
I haue thy feith / and thy benygnytee
As wel / as euere womman was. ⁹ assayed
In greet estat' and poureliche arrayed
Now knowe I deere wyf / thy stedfastnesse
And hire in armes took / and gan hir kesse

¶ And she for wonder / took of it no keepe
She herde nat' what thyng he to hir seyde
She ferde / as she hadde stirt' out of a sleepe
Til she / out of hir mazednesse abreyde

Grisilde quod he / by god þat for vs deyde
Thow art my wyf / noon oother I haue
Ne neuere hadde / as god my soule saue

¶ This is thy doghter / which thow hast supposed [leaf 189]
To be my wyf / that oother feithfully
Shal be myn heir / as I haue ay supposed
Thow bare hym / in thy body trewely
At Boloigne / haue I kept hem priuely
Tak hem agayn / for now maistow nat seye
That thow hast lorn / noon of thy children tweye

¶ And folk / þat oother weys / han seyd of me
I warne hem wel / þat I haue doon this dede
ffor no malice / ne for no cruéltee
But for tassaye in thee / thy wommanhede
And nat to sleen my children / god forbede
But for to kepe hem / pryuely and stille
Til I thy purpos knewe / and al thy wille

¶ Whan she this herde / / aswowne doun she falleth
ffor pitous ioye / and after hir swownynge
She bothe hir yonge children / vn to hire calleth
And in hir armes / pitously wepynge
Embraceth hem / and tendrely kissynge
fful lyk a moder / with hir salte terys
She batheth / bothe hir visage and hir herys

¶ O which a pitous thyng it was to se
Hir swownyng and hir humble voys to heere
Grant mercy lord / god thanke it yow / quod she
That ye han saued me / my children deere
Now rekke I neuere / to been ded right heere
Sith I stonde in youre loue / and in youre grace
No fors of deeth / ne whan my spirit pace

¶ O tendre / o deere / o yonge children myne
Youre woful moder / wende stedefastly
That cruel houndes / or som foul vermyne
Hadde eten yow / but god of his mercy
And youre benygne fader / tendrely
Hath doon yow kept and in that same stounde
Al sodeynly / she swapte adoun to grounde

¶ And in hir swogh / so sadly holdeth she [leaf 189, back]
Hir children two / whan she gan hem tembrace
That with greet sleghte / and greet difficultee
The children from hir arm / they gonne arace
O. many a teer / o many a pitous face
Doun ran / of hem þat stoden hir bisyde
Vnnethe aboute hire / myghte they abyde

¶ Walter hir gladeth / and hir sorwe slaketh
She riseth vp abaysed / from hir traunce
And euery wight hir ioye and feste maketh
Til she / hath caught agayn hir contenaūce
Walter hir dooth / so feithfully plesaūce
That it was deyntee / for to seen the cheere
Bitwix hem two / now they ben met yfeere

¶ Thise ladies / whan þat they / hir tyme say
Han taken hire / and in to chambre goon
And strepen hire / out of hir rude aray
And in a clooth of gold / þat brighte shoon
With a coroune / of many a riche stoon
Vp on hir hed / they in to halle hir broghte
And ther she was / honured as hir oghte

¶ Thus hath this pitous day / a blisful ende
ffor euery man and womman / dooth his myght
This day / in murthe and reuel to dispende
Til on the welkne / shoon the sterres lyght

ffor moore solempne / in euery mannes syght'
This feste was / and gretter of costage
Than was / the reuel of hir mariage

¶ fful many a yeer / in heigh *prosperitee*
Lyuen thise two / in concord and in reste
And richely / his doghter maried he
Vn to a lord / oon of the worthyeste
Of al Ytaille / and thanne in pees and reste
His wyues fader / and his court he kepeth
Til that the soule / out of his body crepeth

¶ His sone / succedeth in his heritage [leaf 190]
In reste and pees / after his fader day
And fortunat' was eek his mariage
Al putte he nat his wyf' in gret assay
This world is nat so strong' it is no nay
As it hath been / in olde tymes yore
And herkneth / what this Auctour seith therfore

¶ This storie is seyd / nat for þat wyues sholde [*Latin note*, p. 402]
ffolwen Grisilde / as in humylitee
ffor it were importable / thogh they wolde
But for þat euery wight' in his degree
Sholde be constant' in aduersitee
As was Grisilde / therfore Petrak writeth
This storie / which he with heigh stile enditeth /

¶ ffor sith a womman / was so pacient'
Vn to a mortal man / wel moore vs oghte
Receyuen al in gree / that god vs sent
ffor gret skile is / he preue that he wroghte
But he ne tempteth / no man þat he boghte
As seith Seint Iame / if ye his pistel rede
He preueth folk al day / it is no drede

¶ And suffreth vs / as for oure exercise
With sharpe scourges / of aduersitee
fful ofte to be bete / in sondry wise
Nat for to knowe oure wyl / for certes he
Er we were born / knew al oure freletee
And for oure beste / is al his gouernance
Let vs thanne lyue / in vertuous suffrance

¶ But o word lordynges / herkneth er I go
It were ful hard / to fynde now a dayes
In al a town / Grisildis thre or two
ffor if þat they were put to swiche assayes
The gold of hem / hath now so badde alayes
With bras / that thogh the coigne / be fair at eye
It wolde rather / breste atwo than plye

¶ ffor which heere / for the wyues loue of Bathe [leaf 190, back]
Whos lyf/ and al hir secte / god mayntene
In heigh maistrie / or ellis were it scathe
I wol with lusty herte / fressh and grene
Seye yow a song to glade yow I wene
And lat vs stynte / of ernestful matere
Herkneth my song that seith in this manere

¶ Here is ended the tale / of the clerk of/ Oxenford

¶ Lenuoy de Chaucer

GRisilde is deed / and eek hir pacience
And bothe atones / buryed in Ytaille
ffor which I crye / in open audience
No wedded man / so hardy be tasssaille
His wyues pacience / in trust to fynde
Grisildis / for in certein he shal faille

¶ O noble wyues / ful of heigh prudence
Lat noon humilitee / youre tonge nayle
Ne lat no clerk / haue cause or diligence
To write of yow / a storie of swich meruaile
As of Grisildis / pacient and kynde
Lest Chichyuache / yow swelwe in hir entrayle

¶ ffolweth Ekko / that holdeth no silence
But euere answereth / at the countretaile
Beth nat bidaffed / for youre Innocence
But sharply / tak on yow the gouernaile
Emprinteth wel / this lessoñ in youre mynde
ffor commune profit/ sith it may auaile

¶ Ye Archewyues / stondeth at defense [leaf 191]
Syn ye be strong' as is a gret Camaile
Ne suffreth nat' þat men yow doon offense
And sklendre wyues / fieble as in bataile
Beth egre / as is a tigre yond in Ynde
Ay clappeth as a Mille / I yow consaile

¶ Ne dreed hem nat' dooth hem no reuerence
ffor thogh thyn housbond / armed be in maile
The arwes / of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest' and eek his auentaile
In Ialousie / I rede eek thow hym bynde
And thow shalt make hym couche / as dooth a Quaile

¶ If thow be fair / ther folk ben in presence
Shewe thow thy visage / and thyn aparaile
If thow be foul / be fre of thy dispence
To gete thee freendes / ay do thy trauaile
Be ay of cheere / as light' as leef on lynde
And lat hym care and wepe / and wrynge & wayle

¶ Explicit'

APPENDIX TO GROUP E, § 2.

[*? Original, but rejected, End-Link to the Clerk's Tale, perhaps following l.* 1162, *with which the paraphrase of Petrarch's Latin ends, or l.* 1169.]

¶ This worthy Clerk' whan ended was his tale [*on leaf* 191]
Oure hoost seyde / and swoor by goddes bones
Me were leuere / than a barel ale
My wyf at hom / had herd this legende ones
This is / a gentil tale for the nones
As to my purpos / wiste ye my wille
But thyng that wol nat be / lat it be stille

GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

§ 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ Here bigynneth / the Phisiciens tale. [leaf 191, back]

THer was / as telleth Titus Liuius
A knyght/ that called was Virginius
ffulfild of honour / and of worthynesse
And strong of freendes / and of greet richesse
¶ This knyght' a doghter hadde by his wif
Ne children hadde he mo / in al his lif
ffair was this mayde / in excellent beautee
Abouen euery wight' þat man may see
ffor Nature hath / with souereyn diligence
Yformed hire / in so greet excellence
As thogh she wolde seyn / lo I nature
Thus kan I forme / and peynte a creature
Whan þat me list' who kan me countrefete
Pigmalion noght' thogh he ay forge and bete ¶ quere in Methamorphosios.
Or graue / or peynte / for I dar wel seyn
Apelles Zanzis / sholde werche in veyn ¶ Apelles fecit mirabile opus in tumulo darij. Vide in Alexandri libro. 6º de zanze in libro Tullij.
Outher to graue / or peynte / or forge / or bete
If they presumeden / me to countrefete
ffor he that is / the formere principal
Hath maked me / his vicaire general
To forme and peynten / erthely creaturis
Right as me list' and ech thyng in my cure is
Vnder the Moone / that may wane and waxe
And for my werk' right no thyng wol I axe

My lord and I / been ful of oon acord
I made hire / to the worshipe of my lord
So do I / alle myne othere creatures
What colour þat they han / or what figures
Thus semeth me / that nature wolde seye
This mayde of age / xij. yeer was and tweye
In which þat nature / hadde swich delit
ffor / right as she kan peynte a lilye whit
And reed a Rose / right with swich peynture
She peynted hath / this noble creature
Er she were born / vp-on hir lymes free
Wher as by right swiche colours sholden be
And Phebus / dyed hath hir tresses grete [leaf 192]
Lyk to the stremys / of his burned hete
And if þat excellent was hir beautee
A thousand fold / moore *ver*tuous was she
In hire / ne lakked no condicioñ
That is to preyse / as by discrecioñ
As wel in goost as body / chaast was she
ffor which / she floured in virginitee
With all humilitee / and abstinence
With all atemper*a*nce / and pacience
With mesure eek / of beryng and array
Discreet she was / in answeryng alway
Thogh she were wise Pallas / dar I seyn
Hir facound eek/ ful wommanly and pleyn
No countrefeted termes / hadde she
To seme wys / but after hir degree
She spak/ and alle hir wordes / moore and lesse
Sownynge in *ver*tu / and in gentilesse
Shamefast she was / in maydens shamefastnesse
Constant in herte / and euere in bisynesse
To dryue hire out of ydel slogardye
Bacus hadde of hir mouth / right no maistrye
ffor wyn and youthe / dooth Venus encresse
As men in fyr / wil casten oille / or gresse

And of hir owene vertu / vnconstreyned
She hath ful ofte tyme / syk hir feyned
ffor þat she wolde / fleen the compaignye
Where likly was / to treten of folye
As is at festes / reuels / and at daunces
That been occasions / of daliaunces
Swich thyng' maken children for to be
To soone rype / and boold / as men may se
Which is ful perilous / and hath be yoore
ffor al to soone / may they lerne loore
Of boldnesse / whan she woxe is a wyf/
¶ And ye Maistresses / in youre olde lyf
That lordes doghtres / han in gouernance
Ne taketh of my wordes / no displesance
Thenketh / þat ye been set' in gouernynges
Of lordes doghtres / oonly for two thynges
¶ Owther / for ye han kept' youre honestee [leaf 192, back]
Or ellis / ye han falle in freletee
And knowen wel ynow / the olde daunce
And han forsaken fully / swich meschaunce
ffor euere mo / therfore / for Cristes sake
To teche hem vertu / looke þat ye ne slake
¶ A theef of venyson / that hath forlaft'
His likerousnesse / and al his olde craft'
Kan kepe a fforest' best of any man
Now kepeth wel / for if ye wole ye kan
Looke wel þat ye / vn-to no vice assente
Lest ye be dampned / for youre wikke entente
ffor who so dooth / a traytour is certeyn
And taketh kepe / of that' þat I shal seyn
Of alle tresoñ / souerayn pestilence
Is / whan a wight' bitrayseth Innocence
¶ Ye fadres / and ye modres eek also
Thogh ye han children / be it oon or mo
Youre is the charge / of al hir surueañce
Whil þat they been / vnder youre gouernañce

¶ *nota*

Beth war / if by ensample of youre lyuynge
Or by youre necligence / in chastisynge
That they perisse / for I dar wel seye
If þat they doon / ye shul it deere abeye
Vnder a Shepherde / softe and necligent
The wolf hath many a sheepe / and lomb to-rent
Suffiseth oon ensample / now as heere
ffor I moot turne agayn to my matere
¶ This mayde of which / I wol this tale expresse
So kepte hir self hir neded no maistresse
ffor in hir lyuyng maydens myghten rede
As in a book euery good word / or dede
That longeth / to a mayden vertuous
She was so prudent and so bounteuous
ffor which the fame out sproong on euery syde
Bothe of hir beautee / and hir bountee / wyde
That thurgh that land / they preysed hire echone
That loued vertu / saue enuye allone
That sory is / of oother mennes wele ¶ Augustinus.
And glad is / of his sorwe / and his vnheele
The doctor / maketh this discripcioun [leaf 193]
This mayde / vp-on a day / wente in the toun
Toward a temple / with hir moder deere
As is / of yonge maydens the manere
¶ Now was ther thanne / a Iustice in that toun
That gouernour was / of that Regioun
And so bifel / this Iuge hise eyen caste
Vp-on this mayde / auysynge hym ful faste
As she cam forby / ther as this Iuge stood
Anoon his herte chaunged / and his mood
So was he caught with beautee of this mayde
And to hym self / ful pryuely he sayde
This mayde shal be myn / for any man
Anon the feend / in-to his herte ran
And taughte hym sodeynly / þat he by slyghte
This mayden / to his purpos wynne myghte

ffor certes / by no force / ne by no meede
Hym thoughte / he was nat able for to speede
ffor she was strong of freendes / and eek she
Confermed was / in swich souerayn bountee
That wel he wiste / he myghte hir neuere wynne
As for to make hire / with hir body synne
ffor which / by greet deliberacioun
He sente after a cherl / was in the town
Which þat he knew / for subtil and for bold
This Iuge vn-to this cherl / his tale hath told
In secree wise / and made hym to ensure
He sholde telle it to no creature
And if he dide / he sholde lese his heed
Whan þat assented was / this cursed reed
Glad was this Iuge / and maked hym gret cheere
And yaf hym yiftes / preciouse and deere
¶ Whan shapen was / al hir conspiracie
ffro point to point how þat his lecherie
Parfourned sholde been / ful subtilly
As ye shul heere it after openly
¶ Hom goth the cherl / that highte Claudius
This false Iuge / that highte Apius
So was his name / for this is no fable
But knowen / for historial thyng notable
The sentence of it sooth is out of doute [leaf 193, back]
This false Iuge / gooth now faste aboute
To hasten his delit al that he may
And so bifel / soone after on a day
This false Iuge / as telleth vs the storie
As he was wont sat in his Consistorie
And yaf his domes / vp-on sondry cas
¶ This false cherl cam forth / a ful gret pas
And seyde / lord if þat it be youre wille
As dooth me right vp-on this pitous bille
In which / I pleyne vp-on Virginius
And if þat he wol seyn / it is nat thus

I wol it preue / and fynde good witnesse
That sooth is / that my bille wol expresse
¶ This Iuge answerde / of this in his absence
I may nat yeue / diffynytif sentence
Lat do hym calle / and I wol gladly heere (audire)
Thow shalt haue al right' and no wrong heere (hic)
Virginius cam to wite / the Iuges wille
And right anon / was rad this cursed bille
The sentence of it' was as ye shul heere
¶ To yow my lord / sire Apius so deere
Sheweth / youre poure seruant Claudius
How þat a knyght' called Virginius
Agayns the lawe / agayn al equitee
Holdeth expres / agayn the wyl of me
My seruant' which þat is my thral by right'
Which fro myn hous / was stole vp-on a nyght'
Whil that she was ful yong' this wol I preue
By witnesse lord / so þat it nat yow greue
She nys his doghter nat' what so he seye
Wher to yow / my lord the Iuge I preye
Yeld me my thral / if þat it be youre wille
Lo / this was al the sentence / of his bille
¶ Virginius / gan vp-on the cherl biholde
But hastily / er he his tale tolde
And wolde haue proued it' as sholde a knyght'
And eek' by witnessynge / of many a wight'
That it was fals / that seyde his Aduersarie
This cursed Iuge / wolde no thyng tarie
Ne here a word / moore of Virginius [leaf 194]
But yaf his Iuggement' and seyde thus /
¶ I deme anon / this cherl / his seruant haue
Thou shalt no lenger / in thyn hous hir saue
Go bryng hir forth / and put hire in oure warde
The cherl shal han his thral / this I awarde
¶ And whan / this worthy knyght Virginius
Thurgh sentence / of this Iustice Apius

Moste by force / his deere doghter yeuen
Vn-to the Iuge / in lecherie to lyuen
He goth hym hom / and sette hym in his halle
And leet anoon / his deere doghter calle
And with a face deed / as asshen colde
Vp-on hir humble face / he gan biholde
With fadres pitee / stikyng thurgh his herte
Al wolde he / from his purpos nat conuerte
¶ Doghter quod he / Virginia by thy name
Ther been two weyes / outher deeth / or shame
That thow most suffre / allas þat I was bore
ffor neuere / thow deseruedest wherfore
To dyen / with a swerd / or with a knyf
O deere doghter / endere of my lyf
Which I haue fostred vp / with swich plesance
That thow were neuere / out of my remembrance
O doghter / which that art my laste wo
And in my lyf my laste ioye also
O gemme of chastitee / in pacience
Tak thow thy deeth / for this is my sentence
ffor loue / and nat for hate / thow most be deed
My pitous hand / moot smyten of thyn heed
Allas / þat euere Apius thee say
Thus hath he falsly / Iugged thee to day
And tolde hire al the cas / as ye bifore
Han herd / nat nedeth for to telle it moore
¶ O mercy deere fader / quod this mayde
And with that word / she bothe hir armes layde
Aboute his nekke / as she was wont to do
The teeris borste / out of hir eyen two
And seyde / goode fader / shal I dye
Is ther no grace / is ther no remedye
¶ No certes / deere doghter myn quod he [leaf 194, ba
¶ Thanne yif me leyser / fader myn quod she
My deeth for to compleyne / a litel space
ffor pardee Iepte / yaf his doghter grace ¶ Iudicum cap.o

ffor to compleyne / er he hir slowe allas — fuit illō tempore lepte Gulaandes.
And god it woot' no thyng was hir trespas
But for she ran / hir fader for to se
To welcome hym / with greet solempnytee
And with that word / she fil aswowne anon
And after / whan hir swownyng is agon
She riseth vp / and to hir fader sayde
Blessed be god / þat I shal dye a mayde
Yif me my deeth / er þat I haue a shame
Dooth with youre child / youre wyl a goddes name
And *with* that word / she preyed hym ful ofte
That with his swerd / he wolde smyte softe
And with that word / aswowne doun she fil
¶ Hir fader / with ful sorweful herte and wil
Hir heed of smoot' and by the tope it hente
And to the Iuge / he gan it to *pre*sente
As he sat yet' in doom / in Consistorie
¶ And whan the Iuge it saw / as seith the storie
He bad to take hym / and anhange hym faste
But right anon / a thousand peple In thraste
To saue the knyght' for routhe and for pitee
ffor knowen was / the false Iniquitee
¶ The peple anon / hadde suspect' in this thyng'
By manere / of the cherles chalangyng'
That it was / by the assent of Apius
They wisten wel / þat he was lecherus
ffor which / vn-to this Apius they gon
And caste hym in a *pri*son / right anon
Ther as he slow hym self' / and Claudius
That seruant was / vn-to this Apius
Was demed / for to hange vp on a tree
But that Virginius / of his pitee
So preyde for hym / that he was exiled
And ellis certes / he hadde been bigyled
The remenant were anhanged / moore and lesse
That were consentant' of this cursednesse

¶ Heere may men seen / how synne hath his merite [leaf 195]
Beth war / for no man woot whom god wol smyte
In no degree / ne in which manere wise
The worm of conscience / may agrise
Of wikked lyf / thogh it so pryuee be
That no man woot ther of / but god and he
ffor be he lewed man / or ellis lered
He noot how soone / that he shal been afered
Ther-fore I rede yow / this conseil take
fforsaketh synne / er synne yow forsake

¶ Here endeth the Phisiciens tale ☙

¶ The myry talkyng' of the Hoost' to the Phisicien & and the *Par*doner

Oure Hoost gan to swere / as he were wood
Harrow quod he / by nayles and by blood
This was a fals cherl / and a fals Iustise
As shameful deeth / as herte may deuyse
Come to thise Iuges / and hir Aduocatz
Algate this sely made / is slayn allas
Allas / to deere boghte she beautee
Wherfore I seye alday / þat men may se
That yiftes of ffortune / and of nature
Been cause of deeth / to many a creature
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Of bothe yiftes / þat I speke of now
Men han ful ofte / moore for harm than prow
¶ But trewely / myn owene maister deere
This is a pitous tale / for to heere
But nathelees passe ouer / is no fors
I pray to god / so saue thy gentil cors
And eek thyne vrynals / and thy Iurdones
Thyn Ypocras / and eek thy galyones
And euery boyste / ful of thy letuarie
God blesse hem / and oure lady Seinte Marie
So mote I then / thow art a *pro*pre man
And lyk a *pre*lat / by Seint Ronyan
Seyde I nat wel / I kan nat' speke in terme [leaf 195, back]
But wel I woot' thow doost myn herte to erme
That I almoost' haue caught' a Cardynacle
By corpus bones / but if I haue triacle
Or ellis a draghte / of moyste and corny ale
Or but I heere anon / a murye tale

Myn herte is lost' for pitee of this mayde
¶ Thow beel amy / thow Pardoner he sayde
Tel vs som myrthe / or Iapes right anon
¶ It shal be doon quod he / by Seint Ronyon
But first quod he / heere at this ale stake
I wol bothe drynke / and eten of a Cake
¶ And right anon / thise gentils gonne to crye
Nay lat hym telle vs / of no ribawdye
Tel vs som moral thyng' / þat we may leere
Som wit / and thanne wol we gladly heere
¶ I graunte ywis quod he / but I moot thynke
Vpon som honeste thyng' whil þat I drynke

¶ Radix omnium malorum / est Cupiditas // Ad Thimotheum. 6°. ☙

¶ Here bigynneth the Prologe of the Pardoners tale ☙

LOrdynges quod he / in chirches whan I preche
I peyne me / to han an hauteyn speche
And rynge it out' as round as gooth a belle
ffor I kan / al by rote that I telle
My theme is alwey oon / and euere was
Radix malorum / est cupiditas
¶ ffirst I pronounce / whennes þat I come
And thanne my bulles / shewe I alle & some
Oure lige lordes seel / on my patente
That shewe I first' my body to warente
That no man be so boold / ne preest ne clerk'
Me to destourbe / of Cristes holy werk'
And after that' thanne telle I forth my tales
Bulles of Popes / and of Cardynales
Of Patriarkes / and Bisshopes I shewe [leaf 196]
And in latyn / I speke a wordes fewe
To saffron with / my predicacioñ
And for to stire hem / to deuocioñ
¶ Thanne shewe I forth / my longe cristal stones
Ycrammed ful / of cloutes and of bones
Relikes been they / as wenen they echon
Thanne haue I in a latoñ / a shulder bon
Which þat was / of an holy Iewes sheepe
Goode men I seye / tak of my wordes keepe
If þat this boon be wasshe / in any welle
If cow / or calf' or sheepe / or Oxe swelle
That any worm hath ete / or worm ystonge
Taak water of that welle / and wasshe his tonge

And it is hool anoon / and forther moor
Of pokkes / and of Scabbe / and euery soor
Shal euery sheepe be hool / þat of this welle
Drynketh a draughte / taak kepe eek what I telle
¶ If þat the goode man / þat the bestes oweth
Wol euery wike / er þat the cok hym croweth
ffastynge / drynken of this welle a draghte
As thilke holy Iew / oure eldres taghte
Hise bestes and his stoor / shal multiplie
And sire also / it heeleth Ialousie
ffor thogh a man / be falle in Ialous rage
Lat maken with this water / his potage
And neuere shal he moore / his wyf mystriste
Thogh he the soothe / of hir defaute wiste
Al hadde she / taken preestes / two or thre
¶ Heere is a Miteyn eek / þat ye may se
He þat his hand / wol putte / in this Mitayn
He shal haue / multiplyyng of his grayn
Whan he hath sowen / be it whete or Otes
So þat / he / offre pens / or ellis grotes
¶ Goode men and wommen / o thyng warne I yow
If any wight be in this chirche now
That hath doon synne horrible / that he
Dar nat for shame / of it yshryuen be
Or any womman / be she yong or old
That hath ymaked / hir housbond Cokewold
Swich folk / shal haue no power / ne no grace [leaf 196, back]
To offren to my Relikes / in this place
And who so fyndeth hym / out of swich blame
He wol come vp / and offre a goddes name
And I assoille hym / by the auctoritee
Which þat by bulle / ygraunted was to me
¶ By this gaude / have I wonne / yeer by yeer
An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner
I stonde lyk a Clerk / in my pulpet
And whan that lewed peple / is doun yset

I preche so / as ye han herd bifore
And telle / an hundred false Iapes more
Thanne peyne I me / to strecche forth the nekke
And Est and west vp-on the peple I bekke
As dooth a dowue / sittyng on a berne
Myne handes / and my tonge goon so yerne
That it is ioye / to se my bisynesse
Of Auarice / and of swich cursednesse
Is al my prechyng for to make hem free
To yeuen hir pens / and namely vn-to me
ffor myn entente is nat but for to wynne
And no thyng for correccioun of synne
I rekke neuere / whan þat they been beryed
Thogh þat hir soules / goon a blakeberyed
ffor certes / many a predicacioñ
Comth ofte tyme / of yuel entencioñ
¶ Som for plesance of folk and flaterye
To been auanced / by ypocrisie
And som for veyne glorie / and som for hate
ffor whan I dar / noon oother weyes debate
Thanne wol I stynge hym / with my tonge smerte
In prechyng so þat he shal nat asterte
To been diffamed falsly / if þat he
Hath trespased / to my bretheren / or to me
ffor though I telle noght his propre name
Men shal wel knowe / that it is the same
By signes / and by othere circumstances
Thus quyte I folk that doon vs displesances
Thus spete I out my venym vnder hewe
Of holynesse / to seme holy and trewe
But shortly / myn entente I wol deuyse [leaf 197]
I preche of no thyng but for coueitise
Ther-fore my theme is yet and euere was
Radix malorum / est Cupiditas
¶ Thus kan I preche / agayn that same vice
Which þat I vse / and that is Auarice

But though my self' be gilty in that synne
Yet kan I make / oother folk to twynne
ffrom Auarice / and soore to repente
But that is nat' my principal entente
I preche no thyng' but for coueitise
Of this matere / it oghte ynow suffise
¶ Thanne telle I hem / ensamples many oon
Of olde stories / longe tyme agoon
ffor lewed peple / louen tales olde
Swiche thynges / kan they wel reporte & holde
What trowe ye / þat whiles I may preche
And wynne / gold and siluer / for I teche
That I wol lyue in pouerte / wilfully
Nay nay / I thoghte it neuere trewely
ffor I wol preche / and begge / in sondry landes
I wol nat do no labour / with myne handes
Ne make baskettes / and lyue ther by
By cause / I wol nat beggen ydelly
I wol / none of the Apostles countrefete
I wol haue moneye / wolle / chese / and whete
Al were it yeuen / of the pouerest page
Or of the pouereste widwe / in a Village
Al sholde hir children / sterue for famyne
Nay I wol drynke / licour of the vyne
And haue a ioly wenche / in euery toun
But herkneth lordynges / in conclusioun
Youre likyng is / þat I shal telle a tale
Now haue I dronke / a draghte of corny Ale
By god I hope / I shal yow telle a thyng'
That shal by resoñ / been at youre likyng'
ffor thogh my self be / a ful vicious man
A moral tale / yet I yow telle kan
Which I am wont to preche / for to wynne
Now holde youre pees / my tale I wol bigynne

[H]ere bigynneth / the Pardoner*s* tale ☙

IN fflandres / whilom was a compaignye [leaf 197, back]
Of yonge folk' that haunteden folye 464
As Riot' hasard / Stewes / and Tauernes
Where as with harpes / lutes / and gyternes
They daunce / and pleyen at dees / bothe day & nyght'
And ete also and drynke / ouer hir myght' 468
Thurgh which / they doon the deuel sacrifise
With-Inne that deueles temple / in cursed wise
By super*fluytee* / abhomynable
Hir othes been so grete / and so dampnable 472
That it is grisly / for to heere hem swere
Oure blissed lordes body / they to-tere
Hem thoughte / that Iewes / rente hym noght ynough
And eech of hem / at otheres synne lough 476
And right anon / thanne coomen Tombesteres
ffetys and smale / and yonge ffrutesteres
Syngeris with harpes / Baudes / waufereres
Whiche been / the verray deueles Officers 480
To kyndle and blowe / the fyr of lecherye
That is annexed / vn-to glotonye
The holy writ take I / to my witnesse
That luxure / is in wyn / and dronkenesse ¶ Nolite inebriari vino in quo est luxuria
¶ Lo how þat dronken loth / vnkyndely
Lay by his doghtres two / vnwityngly
So dronke he was / he nyste what he wroghte
Herodes / who so wel the stories soghte 488
[. . . . . .
. . . . . *no spurious lines in this MS.*]

Whan he of wyn was replet' at his feste
Right at his owene table / he yaf his heste
To sleen the Baptist' Ioñ / ful giltelees
Senec' seith a good word doutelees
¶ He seith / he kan no difference fynde ¶ *Nota*
Bitwix a man / that is out of his mynde
And a man / which þat is dronkelewe
But that woodnesse / yfallen in a sherewe
*Per*seuereth lenger / than dooth dronkenesse
O glotonye / ful of cursednesse
O cause first' of oure confusioñ
O original / of oure dampnacioñ
Til Crist hadde boght vs / with his blood agayn
Lo how deere / shortly for to sayn
Aboght was / thilke cursed vileynye [leaf 108]
Corupt' was al this world for glotonye
Adam oure fader/ and his wyf also
ffro Paradys / to labour and to wo
Were dryuen for that vice / it is no drede
ffor whil þat Adam fasted / as I rede
He was in Paradys / and whan þat he // Ieron*imus contra* Iouinianum // Quamdiu Ieiunau[it Adam] in paradiso fuit / comedit & ejectus est. sta[tim] duxit vxorem.
Eet of the frut' defended on a tree
Anon he was out cast' to wo and peyne
O glotonye / on thee wel oghte vs pleyne
¶ O wiste a man / how manye maladies
ffolwen of excesse / and of glotonyes
He wolde been / the moore mesurable
Of his diete / sittyng at his table
Allas the shorte throte / the tendre mouth
Maketh / þat Est' and West' and Northñ and Southñ
In erthe / in Eyr / in Water / men to swynke
To gete a gloton / deyntee mete and drynke
Of this matere / o Paul / wel kanstow trete
Mete vn-to wombe / and wombe eek vn-to mete // esca ventri et venter escis deus autem & hunc & illam destruet/
Shal god destroyen bothe / as Paulus seith
Allas a foul thyng' is it by my feith

To seye this word / and fouler is the dede
Whan man so drynketh / of the white & rede
That of his throte / he maketh his pryuee
Thurgh / thilke cursed super*fluite*
¶ The Apostle wepyng' seith ful pitously // Ad Philipenses capitulo 3°.
Ther walken manye / of whiche yow toold haue I
I seye it now wepyng' with pitous voys
Ther been enemys / of Cristes croys
Of whiche the ende is deth / wombe is hir god
O wombe / o bely / o stynkyng cod
ffulfilled of dong' and of corrupcioun
At either ende of thee / foul is the soun
How greet labour / and cost' is thee to fynde
Thise Cokes / how they stampe / & streyne / & grynde
And turnen substance / in-to accident'
To fulfillen al / the likerous talent'
Out of the harde bones / knokke they
The mary / for they caste nat awey
That may go thurgh the golet' softe and soote [leaf 198, back]
Of Spicerie / of lief / and bark/ and roote
Shal been his Sauce / ymaked by delit
To make hym yet' a newer appetit'
But ce*r*tes / he that haunteth swiche delices ¶ qui autem in delicijs est viuens / mortuus est /
Is deed / whil þat he lyueth in tho vices
¶ A lecherous thyng is wyn // and dronkenesse ¶ luxuriosa res / vinum
Is ful of stryuyng' and of wrecchednesse ¶ et contumeliosa ebrietas
O dronke man / disfigured is thy face
Sour is thy breeth / foul artow to embrace
And thurgh thy dronke nose / semeth the soun
As thogh thou seydest ay / Sampsoun Sampsoun
And yet god woot' Sampson drank neue*r*e no wyn
Thou fallest' as it were a stiked swyn
Thy tonge is lost' and al thyn honest cure
ffor dronkenesse / is verray sepulture
Of mannes wit' and his discrecioñ
In whom þat drynke / hath domynacioñ

He kan no conseil kepe / it is no drede
Now kepe yow / fro the white and fro the rede
And namely / fro the white wyn of lepe
That is to selle / in ffisshstrete / or in Chepe
This wyn of Spaigne / crepeth subtilly
In othere wynes / growynge faste by
Of which / ther riseth swich fumositee
That whan a man / hath dronken draghtes thre
And weneth þat he be / at hom in Chepe
He is in Spaigne / right at the toune of lepe
Nat at the Rochel / ne at Burdeux toun
And thanne wol he seyn / Sampson Sampsoun
¶ But herkneth lordynges / o word I yow preye
That alle the souereyn actes / dar I seye
Of victories / in the olde testament
Thurgh verray god / that is omnipotent
Were doon in abstinence / and in prayere
Looketh the Bible / and ther ye may it leere
¶ Looke Attilla / the grete conquerour
Deyde in his sleepe / with shame and dishonour
Bledyng at his nose / in dronkenesse
A Capitayn / sholde lyue in sobrenesse
¶ And ouer al this / auyseth yow right wel [leaf 199]
What was comaunded / vn-to Lamwel ¶ Noli vinum dare &c.
Nat Samuel / but Lamwel seye I
Redeth the Bible / and fynd it expresly
Of wyn yeuynge / to hem þat han Iustise
Namoore of this / for it may wel suffise
¶ And now / that I haue spoken of glotonye
Now wol I / yow defende hasardrye
Hasard / is verray moder of lesynges ¶ Policratici libro 1°. Mendaciorum & peruiriarum mater est Alea.
And of deceite / and cursed forswerynges
Blaspheme of Crist manslaughtre / and wast also
Of catel / and of tyme / and forthermo
It is reproue / and contrarie of honour
ffor to ben holden / a comunne hasardour

And euere the hyer / he is of estaat'
The moore is he holden desolat'
If þat a Prynce / vseth hasardrye
In alle gouernance / and policye
He is / as by commune opynyoñ
Yholde / the lasse in reputacioñ
¶ Stilbon / that was a wys Embassadour
Was sent to Corynthe / in ful gret honour
ffro lacedomye / to make hire alliaunce
And whan he cam / hym happed par chaunce
That alle the gretteste / þat were of that lond
Pleiynge at the hasard / he hem fond
ffor which as soone / as it myghte be
He stal hym hom agayn / to his contree
And seyde / ther wol I nat lese my name
Ny wol nat take on me / so greet defame
Yow for to allie / vn-to none hasardours
Sendeth / othere wise Embassadours
ffor by my trouthe / me were leuere dye
Than I yow sholde / to hasardours allye
ffor ye that been / so glorious in honours
Shal nat allye yow / with hasardours
As by my wyl / ne as by my tretee
This wise Philosophre / thus seyde he
¶ Looke eek / that to the kyng Demetrius
The kyng of Parthes / as the book seith vs
Sente hym a paire of dees / of gold in scorn [leaf 199, back]
ffor he hadde vsed / hasard ther biforn
ffor which / he heeld his glorie / or his renoun
At no value / or reputacioun
Lordes may fynden / oother manere pley
Honeste ynow / to dryue the day awey
¶ Now wol I speke / of oothes false and grete
A word or two / as olde bokes trete
¶ Greet sweryng' is a thyng abhomynable
And fals sweryng' is yet' moore repreuable

The heighe god / forbad sweryng at al
Witnesse on Mathew / but in special ¶ Nolite iurare omnino Mathei 5°
Of sweryng seith the holy Ieremye ¶ Ieremie 4°. Iurabis in veritate in Iudicio & Iusticia
Thow shalt swere sooth thyne othes / & nat lye
And swere in doom / and eek in rightwisnesse
But ydel sweryng is a cursednesse.
¶ Bihoold and se / þat in the firste table
Of heighe goddes hestes honurable
How þat the seconde heste of hym / is this
Take nat my name / in ydel or amys
Lo rather he forbedeth · swich sweryng
Than homycide / or many a cursed thyng
I seye / þat as by ordre / thus it standeth
This knoweth / that hise hestes vnderstandeth
How that the seconde heste of god / is, that
And forther ouer / I wol thee telle al plat
That vengeance / shal nat parten from his hous
That of hise othes / is to outrageous
By goddes precious herte / and by his nayles.
And by the blood of Crist that is in hayles
Seuene is my chance / and thyn is cynk & treye
By goddes armes / if thow falsly pleye
This dagger / shal thurgh out thyn herte go
This frut cometh / of the bicche bones two
forsweryng / Ire / falsnesse / homycide
Now for the loue of Crist that for vs dyde
Lete youre othes / bothe grete and smale
But sires / now wol I / telle forth my tale
¶ Thise Riotours thre / of which I telle
Longe erst er Pryme ronge of any belle
Were set hem / in a Tauerne to drynke [leaf 200]
And as they sat they herde a belle klynke
Biforn a cors / was caryed to his graue
That oon of hem / gan callen to his knaue
Go bet quod he / and axe redily
What cors is this / that passeth heer forby

And looke / þat thow reporte his name wel
¶ Sire quod this boy / it nedeth neuer a del
It was me told / er ye cam heer two houres
He was pardee / an old felawe of youres
And sodeynly / he was yslayn to nyght
ffordronke / as he sat on his bench vp right
Ther cam a priuee theef / men clepeth deeth
That in this contree / al the peple sleeth
And with his spere / he smoot his herte atwo
And wente his wey / with-outen wordes mo
He hath / a thousand slayn this pestilence
And maister / er ye come in his presence
Me thynketh / that it were necessarie
ffor to be war / of swich an Aduersarie
Beeth redy / for to meete hym euere moore
Thus taughte me my dame / I sey namoore
¶ By Seinte Marie / seyde this Tauerner
The child seith sooth / for he hath slayn this yer
Henne ouer a myle / with-Inne a greet village
Bothe man and womman / child and hyne & page
I trowe / his habitacioñ be there
To been auysed / greet wisdom it were
Er that he dide / a man a dishonour
¶ Ye goddes armes / quod this Riotour
Is it swich peril / with hym for to meete
I shal hym seke / by wey / and eek by Strete
I make avow / to goddes digne bones
Herkneth felawes / we thre been al ones
Lat ech of vs / holde vp his hand to oother
And ech of vs / bicome ootheres brother
And we wol sleen / this false traytour deeth
He shal be slayn / he þat so-manye sleeth
By goddes dignytee / er it be nyght
¶ Togidres han thise thre / hir trouthes plyght
To lyue and dyen / ech of hem with oother [leaf 200, back]
As thogh he were / his owene ybore brother

And vp they stirte / al dronken / in this rage
And forth they goon / towardes that village
Of which the Tauernner / hadde spoke biforn
And many a grisly ooth / thanne han they sworn
And Cristes blessed body / they to-rente
Deeth shal be deed / if they may hym hente
¶ Whan they han goon / nat fully a myle
Right as they wolde / han treden ouer a style
An old man and a poure / with hem mette
This olde man / ful mekely hem grette
And seyde thus / now lordes god yow se
¶ The proudeste / of thise Riotours thre
Answerde agayn / what carl with sory grace
Why artow al forwrapped / saue thy face
Why lyuestow so longe / in so greet age
¶ This olde man / gan looke in his visage
And seyde thus / for I ne kan nat fynde
A man / thogh þat I walked in-to Inde
Neither in Citee / ne in no village
That wolde chaunge / his youthe for myn age
And ther-fore moot I han / myn age stille
As longe tyme / as it is goddes wille
¶ Ne deeth allas / ne wol nat haue my lyf
Thus walke I / lyk a restelees caytyf
And on the ground / which is my modres gate
I knokke with my staf/ bothe erly and late
And seye / leeue moder leet me In
Lo how I vanysshe / flessh & blood & skyn
Allas / whan shal my bones / been at reste
Moder / with yow / wolde I chaunge my cheste
That in my chambre / longe tyme hath be
Ye for an heyre clowt to wrappe me
But yet to me / she wol nat do that grace
ffor which ful pale / and welked is my face
But sires / to yow / it is no curteisye
To speken / to an old man vileynye

But he trespase in word / or ellis in dede
In holy writ' ye may your self wel rede
¶ Agayns an old man / hoor vp-on his heed [leaf 201] ¶ coram canuto capite consurg[e]! [1 *Rats*]
Ye shal arise / wher-fore I yeue yow reed
Ne dooth vn-to an old man / noon harm now
Namoore than þat ye wolde / men dide to yow
In age // if þat ye so longe abyde
And god be with yow / wher ye go or ryde
I moot go thider / as I haue to go
¶ Nay olde cherl / by god thow shalt nat so
Seyde / this oother hasardour anon
Thow partest nat so lightly / by Seint Iohn
Thow speeke right now / of thilke traytour deeth
That in this contree / alle oure freendes sleeth
Haue here my trouthe / as thow art his espye
Tel wher he is / or thow shalt it abye
By god / and by the holy sacrament
ffor soothly / thow art oon of his assent'
To sleen vs yonge folk' thow' false theef/
¶ Now sires quod he / if þat yow be so leef'
To fynde deeth / turn vp this croked wey
ffor in that groue / I lafte hym by my fey
Vnder a tree / and ther he wol abyde
Nat for youre boost' he wol hym no thyng hyde
Se ye that ook' right ther ye schal hym fynde
God saue yow / that boghte agayn man-kynde
And yow amende / thus seyde this olde man
¶ And euerich / of thise Riotours ran
Til he cam to that tree / and ther they founde
Of floryns fyne / of gold / ycoyned rounde
Wel ny an .viij. busshels / as hem thoughte
No lenger thanne / after deeth they soughte
But ech of hem / so glad was of the sighte
ffor þat the floryns / been so faire and brighte
That doun they sette hem / by this precious hoord
The worste of hem / he spak the firste word

¶ Bretheren quod he / taak kepe / what þat I seye
My wit is greet' thogh þat I bourde and pleye
This tresor hath ffortune / vn-to vs ȝeuen
In myrthe and iolitee / oure lyf to lyuen
And lightly as it cometh / so wol we spende
Ey goddes precious dignytee / who wende
To day / that we sholde han / so fair a *grace* [leaf 201, back]
But myghte this gold / be caried fro this place
Hoom to myn hous / or ellis vn-to youres
ffor wel ye woot' that al this gold is oures
Thanne were we / in heigh felicitee
But trewely / by daye it may nat be
Men wolde seyn / þat we were theues stronge
And for oure owene tresor / doon vs honge
This tresor / moste ycaried be by nyghte
As wisly / and as sleyly / as it myghte
Therfore I rede / that' cut amonges vs alle
Be drawe / and lat se / wher the cut' wol falle
And he þat hath the cut' with herte blithe
Shal renne to towne / and that ful swithe
And brynge vs / breed / and wyn / ful priuely
And two of vs / shal kepen subtilly
This tresor wel / and if he wol nat tarye
Whan it is nyght' we wol this tresor carye
By oon assent' wher as vs thynketh best'
That oon of hem / the cut broghte in his fest'
And bad hem drawe / and looke wher it wol falle
And it fel / on the yongeste of hem alle
And forth toward the town / he wente anon
And also soone / as þat he was agon
That oon of hem / spak thus vn-to that oother
Thow knowest wel / thow art my sworn brother
Thy profit' wol I telle thee anon
Thow woost wel / þat oure felawe is agon
And heere is gold / and that ful greet plentee
That shal departed been / among vs thre

But nathelees / if I kan shape it so
That it departed were / among vs two
Hadde I nat doon / a freendes torn to thee
¶ That oother answerde / I noot how that may be
He woot' þat the gold / is with vs tweye
What shal we doon / what shal we to hym seye
¶ Shal it be conseil / seyde the firste shrewe
And I shal telle / in a wordes fewe
What we shul doon / and brynge it wel aboute
¶ I graunte quod that oother / out of doute
That by my trouthe / I wol thee nat biwreye [leaf 202]
¶ Now quod the firste / thow woost wel we be tweye
And two of vs / shul strenger be than oon
Looke whan þat he is set' that right anon
Arys / as though thow woldest' with hym pleye
And I shal ryue hym / thurgh the sydes tweye
Whil that thow strogelest with hym / as in game
And with thy daggere / looke thow do the same
And thanne shal / al this gold departed be
My deere freend / bitwixe thee and me
Thanne may we bothe / oure lustes al fulfille
And pleye at dees / right at oure owene wille
And thus acorded been / thise sherewes tweye
To sleen the thridde / as ye han herd me seye
¶ This yongeste / which that wente to the toun
fful ofte in herte / he rolleth vp and doun
The beautee of thise floryns / newe & brighte
O lord quod he / if so were þat I myghte
Haue al this tresor / to my self allone
Ther is no man / þat lyueth vnder the trone
Of god / that sholde lyue / so myrie as I
And at the laste / the feend oure enemy
Putte in his thoght' þat he sholde poyson beye
With which he myghte sleen / his felawes tweye
ffor why / the feend foond hym / in swich lyuynge
That he hadde leue / hym to sorwe brynge

ffor this was outrely / his ful entente
To sleen hem bothe / and neuere to repente
¶ And forth he goth / no lenger wolde he tarye
In to the toun / vn-to Apothecarye
And preyed hym / þat he hym wolde selle
Som poysoñ / that he myghte his rattes quelle
And eek ther was / a polcat' in his hawe
That as he seyde / his capons hadde yslawe
And fayn he wolde / wreke hym if he myghte
On vermyn / that destroyed hym by nyghte
¶ The Pothecarie answerde / and thow shalt haue
A thyng' that also god / my soule saue
In al this world / ther is no creature
That ete / or dronke / hath of this confiture
Nat but the montañce / of a corn of whete [leaf 202, back]
That he ne shal his lyf / anoon for-lete
Ye sterue he shal / and that in lasse while
Than thow wolt goon a pass / nat but a myle
The poyson / is so strong/ and violent'
This cursed man / hath in his hand yhent'
This poyson in a box / and sith he ran
In-to the nexte Strete / vn-to a man
And borwed hym / large Botels thre
And in the two / his poison poured he
The thridde / he kepte clene for his drynke
ffor al the nyght' he shoope hym for to swynke
In cariyng' of the gold / out of that place
And whan this Riotour / with sory grace
Hadde filled with wyn / hise grete Botels thre
To hise felawes / agayn repaireth he
¶ What nedeth it' to sarmone of it moore
ffor right as they / hadde cast his deeth bifore
Right so / they han hym slayn / and that anon
And whan this was doon / thus spak that oon
Now lat vs sitte and drynke / and make vs merye
And afterward / we wol his body berye

And with that word / it happed hym *par* cas
To take the Botel / ther the poyson was
And drank/ and yaf his felawe drynke also
ffor which anon / they storuen bothe two
¶ But certes I suppose / that Auycen
Wroot neuere in no Canon / ne in no fen
Mo wonder signes / of empoysonyng'
Than hadde thise wrecches two / er hir endyng'
Thus ended been / thise homicides two
And eek/ the false empoysonere also
¶ O · cursed synne / of alle cursednesse
O · traytours homicide / o wikkednesse
O · glotonye / luxure / and hasardrye
Thou blasphemour of Crist' with vileynye
And othes grete / of vsage / and of pryde
Allas mankynde / how may it bityde
That to thy Creatour / which *þat* thee wroghte
And with his *p*recious herte blood / the boghte
Thow art so fals / and so vnkynde allas [leaf 203]
¶ Now goode men / god foryeue yow youre *tres*pas
And ware yow / fro the synne of Auarice
Myn holy pardoñ / may yow alle warisse
So that ye offre nobles / or starlynges
Or ellis siluer broches / spones / rynges
Boweth youre heed / vnder this holy bulle
Cometh vp ye wyues / offreth of youre wolle
Youre name I entre / here in my rolle anon
In-to the blisse of heuene / shul ye gon
I yow assoile / by myn heigh power
Ye *þat* wol offre / as clene and eek as cler
As ye were born / and lo sires thus I *preche*
And Ihesu crist' that is oure soules leche
So graunte yow / his pardoñ to receyue
ffor that is best' I wol yow nat deceyue
¶ But sires / o word / forgat I in my tale
I haue Relikes and pardon in my male

As faire / as any man in Engelond
Whiche were me yeuen / by the Popes hond
If any of yow / wol of deuocioñ
Offren / and han myn absolucioñ.
Com forth anon / and kneleth here adoun
And mekely / receyueth my pardoun
Or ellis / taketh pardoñ as ye wende
Al newe and fressh̄ / at euery myles ende
So þat ye offren alwey / newe and newe
Nobles / or pens / whiche þat been good & trewe
It is an honour / to euerich that is heer
That ye mowe haue / a suffisant pardoner
Tassoile yow / in contree as ye ryde
ffor auentures / whiche þat may bityde
Parauenture / ther may falle oon or two
Doun of his hors / and breke his nekke atwo
Looke swich a seuretee is it to yow alle
That I am / in youre felaweship y-falle
That may assoille yow / bothe moore & lasse
Whan þat the soule / shal fro the body passe
I rede / that oure hoost shal bigynne
ffor he is moost envoluped in synne
Com forth sire hoost / and offre first anon [leaf 203, back]
And thow shalt kisse / the Relikes euerychon
Ye for a grote / vnbokele anon thy purs
¶ Nay nay quod he / thanne haue I Cristes curs
Lat be quod he / it shal nat be so thee ich
Thow woldest make me kisse thyn olde breech
And swere it were / a Relyk of a Seint
Thogh it were / with thy fondement depeynt
But by the croys / which þat Seint Eleyne foond
I wold I hadde / thy coylons in myn hond
In stide of Relikes / or of Seintuarie
Lat cutte hem of / I wol thee hem carie
They shul be shryned / in an hogges toord
¶ This pardoner / answerde nat a word

So wrooth he was / no word ne wolde he seye
¶ Now quod oure hoost I wol no lenger pleye
With thee / ne with noon oother angry man
¶ But right anon / the worthy knyght bigan
Whan þat he saugh / þat al the peple lough
Namoore of this / for it is right ynough
Sire Pardoner be glad / and murye of cheere
And sire hoost that been to me so deere
I pray yow / þat ye kisse the Pardoner
And Pardoner / I pray thee / drawe thee neer
And as we diden / lat vs lawe and pleye
Anon they kiste / and ryden forþ hir weye

¶ Here is ended the Pardoners tale ☙

GROUP B. (β. FRAGMENT III.)

§ 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

¶ Here bigynneth the Shipmannes tale [Hengwrt MS, leaf 204]

A Marchant whilom / dwelled at Seint Denys
That riche was / for which men helde hym wys
A wyf he hadde / of excellent beautee
And compaignable / and reuelous was she
Which is a thyng' that causeth moore dispence
Than worth / is al the cheere and reuerence
That men hem doon / at festes and at daunces
Swich salutacions / and contenances
Passen / as dooth a shadwe vp on the wal
But wo is hym / that payen moot for al
The sely housbonde / algate he moot paye
He moot vs clothe / and he moot vs arraye
Al for his owene worshipe / richely
In which array / we dauncen iolily
And if *that* he noght may / *par*auenture
Or ellis / list no swich dispense endure
But thynketh / it is wasted and y-lost'
Thanne moot another / payen for oure cost'
Or lene vs gold / and that is *per*ilous
This noble Marchant' heeld a worthy hous
ffor which / he hadde alday / so greet repair
ffor his largesse / and for his wyf was fair
What wonder is / but herkneth to my tale
Amonges alle hise gestes / grete and smale
¶ Ther was a Monk' a fair man and a bold
I trowe / a thritty wynter / he was old
That euere in oon / was drawyng' to that place
This yonge Monk' that was so fair of face

Aqueynted was so / with the goode man
Sith that hir firste knewliche bigan
That in his hous / as famulier was he
As it is possible / any freend to be
And for as muchel / as this goode man
And eek this Monk of which þat I bigan
Were bothe two yborn / in o village
The Monk hym claymeth / as for cosynage
And he agayn / he seith nat ones nay [leaf 264, back]
But was as glad ther of / as fowel of day
ffor to his herte / it was a gret plesance
Thus been they knyt with eterne alliance
And ech of hem / gan oother / for tassure
Of bretherhede / whil þat hir lyf may dure
¶ ffree was daun Iohn / and manly of dispence
As in that hous / and ful of diligence
To doon plesance / and also greet costage
He nat forgat to yeue the leeste page
In al that hous / but after hir degree
He yaf the lord / and sith al his meynee
Whan þat he cam / som manere honeste thyng
ffor which / they were as glad of his comyng
As fowel is fayn / whan þat the sonne vp riseth
Namoore of this as now / for it suffiseth
¶ But so bifel / this Marchant on a day
Shoope hym / to make redy his array
Toward the town of Brugges / for to fare
To byen there / a porcion of ware
ffor which he hath / to Parys sent anon
A messager / and preyed hath daun Iohn
That he sholde come / to Seint Denys and pleye
With hym / and with his wyf a day or tweye
Er he to Brugges wente / in alle wise
¶ This noble Monk of which I yow deuyse
Hath of his Abbot as hym list licence
By cause he was a man / of heigh prudence

And eek an Officer / out for to ryde
To seen hir granges / and hir bernes wyde
And vn to Seint denys / he comth anon
Who was so welcome / as my lord daun Iohn
Oure deere cosyn / ful of curteisye
With hym broghte he / a Iubbe of Maluesye
And eek another / ful of fyn vernage
And volatil / as ay was his vsage
And thus I lete hem / ete and drynke and pleye
This Marchant and this Monk / a day or tweye
¶ The thridde day / this Marchant vp ariseth
And on his nedes / sadly hym auyseth
And vp / in to his Countour hous goth he [leaf 205]
To rekene with hym self / wel may be
Of thilke yeer / how þat it with hym stood
And how þat he / despended hadde his good
And if that he / encressed were or noon
Hise bokes / and his bagges / many oon
He leyth biforn hym / on his Countyng bord
fful riche was his tresor / and his hord
ffor which ful faste / his Countour dore he shette
And eek he nolde / þat no man sholde hym lette
Of his acountes / for the mene tyme
And thus he sit / til it was passed prime
¶ Daun Iohn was risen / in the morwe also
And in the gardyns / walketh to and fro
And hath his thynges seyd / ful curteisly
¶ This goode wyf / cam walkyng priuely
In to the gardyn / ther he walketh softe
And hym salueth / as she hath doon ofte
A mayde child / cam in hir compaignye
Which as hir list she may gouerne and gye
ffor yet vnder the yerde was the mayde
¶ O deere cosyn myn / daun Iohn she sayde
What eyleth yow / so rathe for to ryse
¶ Nece quod he / it oghte ynow suffise

ffyue houres / for to slepe / vp on a nyght'
But it were / for an old apalled wight' 1292
As been thise wedded men / þat lye and dare
As in a forme / sit a wery hare
Were al forstraught' *with* houndes grete & smale
But deere Nece / why be ye so pale 1296
I trowe *cer*tes / that oure goode man
Hath yow laboured / sith the nyght bigan
That yow were nede / to resten hastily
And with that word / he lough ful myrily 1300
And of his owene thoght' he weex al reed
¶ This faire wyf / gan for to shake hir heed
And seyde thus / ye god woot al quod she
Nay cosyn myn / it stant nat so with me 1304
ffor by that god / that yaf me soule and lyf
In al the Reawme of ffrance / is ther no wyf
That lasse lust hath / to that sory pley [leaf 205, back]
ffor I may synge / allas and weilawey 1308
That I was born / but to no wight' quod she
Dar I nat telle / how þat it stant with me
Wher fore I thynke / out of this land to wende
Or ellis / of my self / to make an ende 1312
So ful am I / of drede / and eek of care
¶ This Monk bigan / vp on this wyf to stare
And seyde / allas / my Nece god forbede
That ye / for any sorwe / or any drede 1316
ffordo your self / but telleth me youre grief
*Para*uenture / I may in youre meschief'
Conseille / or helpe / and therfore telleth me
Al youre anoy / for it shal been secree 1320
ffor on my Porthors / I make an oth
That neu*er*e in my lif / for lief / or loth
Ne shal I / of no conseil / yow biwreye
¶ The same agayn to yow / quod she I seye 1324
By god / and by this Porthors / I swere
Thogh men me wolde / al in to peces tere

Ne shal I neuere / for to gon to helle
Biwreye a word / of thyng þat ye me telle
Nat for no cosynage / ne alliance
But verraily / for loue and affiance
Thus been they sworn / and her vp on they keste
And ech of hem / tolde oother what hem leste
¶ Cosyn quod she / if þat I hadde a space
As I haue noon / and namely in this place
Thanne wolde I telle / a legende of my lyf
What I haue suffred / sith I was a wyf
With myn housbonde / al be he youre cosyn
¶ Nay quod this Monk' by god and Seint Martin
He is namore / cosyn vn to me
Than is this leef' þat hangeth on the tree
I clepe hym so / by Seint Denys of ffrance
To han / the moore cause of aqueyntance
Of yow / which I haue loued specially
Abouen alle wommen / sikerly
This swere I yow / on my profession̄
Telleth youre grief / lest þat he come adoun
And hasteth yow / and goth awey anon [leaf 206]
¶ My deere loue quod she / o my daun Iohn
fful lief were me / this conseil for to hyde
But out it moot' I may namoore abyde
¶ Myn housbonde is to me / the worste man
That euere was / sith þat the world bigan
But sith I am a wyf / it sit nat me
To tellen no wight' of oure priuetee
Neither abedde / ne in noon oother place
God shilde / I sholde it tellen for his grace
A wyf ne shal nat seyn / of hir housbonde
But al honour / as I kan vnderstonde
Saue vn to yow / thus muche I tellen shal
As help me god / he is noght worth at al
In no degree / the value of a flye
But yet' me greueth moost his nygardye

And wel ye woo þat wommen naturelly [*Late note*, p. 180.]
Desiren thynges .vj. as wel as I
They wolde / þat hir housbondes sholde be
¶ Hardy and wise / and riche / and ther-to free ¶ nota
And buxom vn to his wyf / and fressh abedde
But by that ilke lord / that for vs bledde
ffor his honour / my self for to arraye
A sonday next' I moot nedes paye
An hundred frankes / or ellis am I lorn
Yet were me leuere / þat I were vnborn
Than me were doon / a sclaundre / or vileynye
And if myn housbonde eek/ myghte it espye
I nere but lost' and ther fore I yow preye
Lene me this somme / or ellis moot I deye
Daun Iohn I seye / lene me thise hundred frankes
Pardee I wil noght' faile yow my thankes
If þat yow list' to doon / that I yow praye
ffor at a certeyn day / I wol yow paye
And doon to yow / what plesance and seruyse
That I may doon / right as yow list deuyse
And but .I. do / god take on me vengeance
As foul / as euere hadde Genelon of ffrance
¶ This gentil Monk' answerde in' this manere
Now trewely / myn owene lady deere
I haue quod he / on yow so gret a routhe
That I yow swere / and plighte yow my trouthe
That whan youre housbonde / is to fflandres fare [leaf 200, back]
I wol deliuere yow / out of this care
ffor I wol brynge yow / an hundred frankes
And with that word / he caughte hire by the flankes
And hire embraceth harde / and kiste hire ofte
Goth now youre wey quod he / al stille and softe
And lat vs dyne / as soone / as þat ye may
ffor by my chilyndre / it is Pryme of day
Goth now /.and beth as trewe as I shal be
¶ Now ellis / god forbede sire quod she

And forth she goth / as iolif as a pye
And bad the Cokes / þat they sholde hem hye 1400
So þat men myghte dyne / and that anon
Vp to hir housbonde / is his wyf ygon
And knokketh at his Countour / boldely [1 ys interlined by a late hand]
¶ Who[1] ther quod he / Peter it am I .qi la. 1404
Quod she / what sire / how longe wol ye faste
How longe tyme / wol ye rekene and caste
Youre sommes / and youre bokes / and youre thynges
The deuel haue part' on alle swiche rekenynges 1408
Ye haue ynogh pardee / of goddes sonde
Com doun to day / and lat youre bagges stonde
Ne be ye nat ashamed / that daun Ioħn
Shal fastynge / al this day elenge gon 1412
What lat vs here a masse / and go we dyne
¶ Wyf quod this man / litel kanstow deuyne
The curious bisynesse / that we haue
ffor of vs chapmen / also god me saue 1416
And by that lord / that clepid is Seint Yue
Scarsly amonges .xij. x. shul thryue
Continuelly / lastyng vn to oure age
We may wel make cheere / and good visage 1420
And dryue forth the world / as it may be
And kepen oure estat' in pryuetee
Til we be dede / or ellis that we pleye
A pilgrymage / or goon out of the weye 1424
And ther fore / haue I gret necessitee
Vp on this queynte world / tauyse me
ffor euere mo / we mote stonde in drede
Of hap and ffortune / in oure chapmanhede 1428
¶ To fflandres wol I go / tomorwe at day [leaf 207]
And come agayn / as soone as euere I may
ffor which my deere wyf / I thee biseke
As be to euery wight' buxom and meke 1432
And for to kepe oure good / be curious
And honestly / gouerne wel oure hous

Thow hast ynow / in euery manere wise
That to a thrifty houshold / may suffise
Thee lakketh noon array / ne no vitaille
Of siluer in thy purs / shaltow nat faille
And with that word / his Countour dore he shette
And doun he goth / no lenger wolde he lette
But hastily / a masse was ther seyd
And spedily / the tables were yleyd
And to the dyner / faste they hem spedde
And richely this Monk' the chapman fedd
¶ At after dyner / daun Iohn sobrely
This chapman took a part' and priuely
He seyde hym thus / cosyn it standeth so
That wel I se / to Brugges wol ye go
God and Seint Austyn / spede yow and gyde
I pray yow cosyn / wysly þat ye ryde
Gouerneth yow also / of youre diete
Atemprely / and namely / in this hete
Bitwix vs two / nedeth no strange fare
ffarewel cosyn / god shilde yow fro care
And if þat any thyng' by day or nyght
If it lye in my power / and my myght'
That ye me wol comande / in any wise
It shal be doon / right as ye wol deuyse
¶ O thing er þat ye goon / if it may be
I wold preye yow / for to lene me
An hundred frankes / for a wyke or tweye
ffor certeyn bestes / þat I moste beye
To store with a place / that is oures
God help me so / I wolde it were youres
I shal nat faille / seurely of my day
Nat for a thousand frankes / a myle way
But lat this thyng be secree / I yow preye
ffor yet to nyght' thise bestes moot I beye
And fare now wel / myn owene cosyn deere [leaf 267, back]
Grant mercy / of youre cost' and of youre cheere

¶ This noble Marchant' gentilly anon
Answerde and seyde / o cosyn myn daun Iohn
Now sikerly / this is a smal requeste
My gold is youres / whan þat it yow leste
And nat oonly my gold / but my chaffare
Tak what yow list' god shilde þat ye spare
But o thyng is / ye knowe it wel ynow
Of Chapmen / that hir moneye is hir plow
We may creance / whil we han a name
But goldlees for to been / it is no game
Pay it agayn / whan it lyth in youre ese
After my myght' ful fayn wol I yow plese
¶ Thise hundred frankes / he fette forth anon
And priuely / he took hem to daun Iohn
No wight in al this world / wiste of this lone
Sauyng' this Marchant' and daun Iohn allone
They drynke / and speke / and rome a while & pleye
Til that daun Iohn / rideth to his Abbeye
¶ The morwe cam / and forth this Marchant rydeth
To fflandres ward / his Prentys wel hym gydeth
Til he cam / in to Brugges murily
Now goth this Marchant' faste and bisily
Aboute his nede / and byeth and creañceth
He neither / pleyeth at the dees / ne daunceth
But as a Marchant' shortly for to telle
He let his lyf / and ther I lete hym dwelle
¶ The sonday next / the Marchant was agon
To Seint denys / ycomen is daun Iohn
With crowne and berd / al fressh & newe shaue
In al the hous / ther nas so litel a knaue
Ne no wight ellis / þat he nas ful fayn
That my lord daun Iohn / was come agayn
And shortly / to the poynt' right for to gon
This faire wyf' accorded with daun Iohn
That for thise hundred frankes / he sholde al nyght'
Haue hire in his armes / bolt vpright'

And this acord / *par*fourned was in dede
In myrthe al nyght' a bisy lyf they lede
Til it was day / that daun Iohn wente his way · [leaf 208]
And bad the meynee / fare wel haue good day
ffor noon of hem / ne no wight in the town
Hath of daun Iohn / right no suspecioun
And forth he rydeth hom / til his Abbeye
Or where hym list' namoore of hym I seye
¶ This Marchant' whan þat ended was the faire
To Seint Denys / he gan for to repaire
And with his wyf / he maketh feste and cheere
And telleth hire / that chaffare is so deere
That nedes / moste he make a cheuyssance
ffor he was bounden / in a reconyssance
To paye / twenty thousand sheelde anon
ffor which / this Marchant' is to Parys gon
To borwe / of *cer*teyne freendes / that he hadde
A *cer*teyn frankes / and so*mme* *with* hym he ladde
And whan þat he was come / in to the town
ffor greet chiertee / and greet affeccioun
Vn to daun Iohn / he first goth / hym to pleye
Nat for to axe / or borwe of hym moneye
But for to wite / and seen of his welfare
And for to tellen hym / of his chaffare
As freendes doon / whan they been met yfeere
Daun Iohn / hym maketh feste / and murye cheere
And he hym tolde agayn / ful specially
How he hadde / wel yboght' and *gra*ciously
Thanked be god / al hool his marchandise
Saue þat he moste / in alle maner wyse
Maken a cheuyssance / as for his beste
And thanne he sholde been / in ioye and reste
¶ Daun Iohn answerde / certes I am fayn
That ye in heele / ar comen hom agayn
And if þat I were riche / as haue I blisse
Of twenty thousand sheeld / sholde ye nat mysse

ffor ye so kyndely / this oother day
Lente me gold / and as I kan and may
I thanke yow / by god / and by Seint Iame
But nathelees / I took vn to oure dame
Yowre wyf at hom / the same gold agayn
Vp on youre bench̄ / she woot it wel certayn
By certeyn toknes / that I kan yow telle [leaf 208, back]
Now by youre leue / I may no lenger dwelle
Oure Abbot wol out of this town anon
And in his compaignye / moot I gon
Greet wel oure dame / myn owene Nece swete
And fare wel deere cosyn / til we meete
¶ This Marchant which þat was ful war and wys
Creanced hath / and payed eek in Parys
To certeyn lombardes / redy in hir hond
The somme of gold / and gat of hem his bond ¶ .i. obligacionem.
And hoom he gooth / murye as a Papyniay
ffor wel he knew / he stood in swich array
That nedes moste he wynne / in that viage
A thousand frankes / abouen al his costage
¶ His wyf ful redy / mette hym at the gate
As she was wont of old vsage algate
And al that nyght in myrthe they bisette
ffor he was riche / and cleerly out of dette
¶ Whan it was day / this Marchant gan embrace
His wyf al newe / and kiste hire on hir face
And vp he goth / and maketh it ful tough̄
Namoore quod she / by god ye haue ynough̄
And wantownely agayn / with hym she pleyde
Til at the laste / this Marchant seyde
¶ By god quod he / I am a litel wroth
With yow my wyf / al thogh it be me looth
And woot ye why / by god as þat I gesse
That ye han maad / a manere strangenesse
Bitwixen me / and my cosyn daun Iohn
Ye sholde han warned me / er I had gon

That he yow hadde / a hundred frankes payed
By redy tokne / and heeld hym yuele apayed
ffor that I to hym / spak of cheuyssance
Me semed so / as by his contenance
But nathelees / by god oure heuene kyng⁹
I thoghte nat⁹ to axe of hym no thyng⁹
I pray thee wyf⁹ ne do namoore so
Tel me alwey / er that I fro thee go
If any dettour / hath in myn absence
Ypayed thee / lest thurgh thy necligence
I myghte hym axe / a thyng⁹ *þat* he hath payed [leaf 209]
¶ This wyf / was nat afered ne afrayed
But boldely she seyde / and *that* anon
Marie I diffye / the false Monk⁹ daun Iohn
I kepe nat of his toknes / neu*er* a del
He took me *cer*teyn gold / this woot I wel
What yuel thedam / on his Monkes snowte
ffor god it woot⁹ I wende with outen dowte
That he hadde yeue it me / by cause of yow
To doon ther with / myn honour and my prow
ffor cosynage / and eek for bele cheere
That he hath had / ful ofte tymes heere
¶ But sith I se / it stant in this disioynt⁹
I wole answere yow / shortly to the poynt⁹
Ye han mo slakker dettours / than am I
ffor I wol paye yow / wel and redily
ffro day to day / and if so be I fayle
I am youre wyf / score it vp on my tayle
And I shal paye / as soone as euere I may
ffor by my trouthe / I haue on myn array
And nat in wast⁹ bistowed eu*ery* del
And for I haue / bistowed it so wel
ffor youre honour / for goddes sake I seye
As be nat wrooth / but lat vs laughe & pleye
Ye shal / my ioly body han to wedde
By god / I wol noght paye yow but a bedde

fforgyue it me / myn owene spouse deere
Turn hiderward / and maketh bettre cheere
¶ This Marchant' saugh / ther was no remedye
And for to chide / it nere but folye
Syn that the thyng' may nat amended be
Now wyf he seyde / and I foryeue it thee
But by thy lyf / ne be namoore so large
Keepe bet thy good / this yeue I thee in charge
Thus endeth my tale / and god vs sende
Taillynge ynough / vn to oure lyues ende.

¶ Here endeth / the Shipmannes tale ☙

[*As there is no room in this print for the notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.*]

l. 1363. A woman wolld haue her husband / to be hardye / wyse / Ryche free / buxom / that is to saye gentell / and to be freshe in bed / these / syxe things a woman dothe desyre / as Mr Chaucer dothe wryte. [MS, leaf 206.] [*In a late hand.*]

l. 1770. ¶ legam*us* Apocalipsim Ioh*ann*is / et ibi rep*er*im*us* agnum sup*er* mont*em* syon & cum illo .Cxliiij. Milia signator*um* &c qui cantant canticum nouum &c.

¶ Isti sun*t* qui *cum* mulierib*us* se non coinquinauerun*t* virgines aute*m* p*er*manserunt /. Hii sunt q*ui* secunt*ur* agnum quocumq*ue* vadit &c. [MS, leaf 211, back.]

l. 1817. ¶ Rachel plorans filios suos noluit consolari &c.

l. 1828. // de pu*er*o q*ui* cantauit/ de gl*or*iosa virgine

// de maria q*ui*cquid sciuit
puer cantans enut*r*iuit
} Mat*er*nam inopiam

// hun*c* Iude*us* neq*uam* strauit
domo sua que*m* humauit
} Diram p*er* Inuidiam

// Mat*er* quere*ns* hun*c* vocauit
hic in terra recantauit
} Solita preconia

// Puer liber mox exiuit
Mortis reos lex puniuit
} Iudeos &c.

[MS, lf 212, bk.]

¶ Herke the myrie Wordes / of the Worthy Hoost' [leaf 209, back]

WEl seyd / by corpus dominus / quod oure Hoost'
Now longe / moote thow saille by the coost'
Thow gentil Maister / gentil Maryner
God yeve the Monk / a thousand last quaad yeer
A .ha. felawes / beth war of swich a Iape
The Monk putte / in the mannes hood an Ape
And in his wyues eek / by Seint Austyn
Draweth no Monkes / moore in to youre In
¶ But now passe ouer / and lat vs seke aboute
Who shal now telle first' of al this route
Another tale / and with that word he sayde
As curteisly / as it hadde been a mayde
My lady Prioresse / by youre leue
So that .I. wiste / I sholde yow nat agreue
I wolde demen / that ye telle sholde
A tale next' if so were that ye wolde
Now wol ye vouche it sauf' my lady deere
¶ Gladly quod she / and seyde as ye shal heere.

¶ The proheme of the Prioresse tale ☙

Domine dominus noster ☙

O lord oure lord / thy name how me*r*ueilous
Is in this large world / ysprad quod she
ffor nat oonly / thy laude precious
P*ar*fourned is / by men of dignytee 1646
But by the mouth of children / thy bou*n*tee
Parfourned is / for on the brest soukynge
Som tyme / shewen they thyn heryynge 1649

¶ Wher fore in laude / as I best kan or may
Of thee / and of the white lilye flour
Which þ*a*t the bar / and is a mayde alway
To telle a storie / I wol do my labour 1653
Nat' that I may / encressen hir honour
ffor she hir self / is honour / and the Roote
Of bou*n*tee next hir sone / and soules boote 1656

¶ O. moder mayde / o mayde moder free [leaf 210]
O, bussħ vnbrent' brennyng in Moyses sighte
That rauysedest' doun / fro the deitee
Thurgh thyn humblesse / the goost/ þ*a*t in thalighte 1660
Of whos v*er*tu / whan he thyn herte lighte
Conceyued was / the fadres sapience
Help me / to telle it in thy reuerence 1663

¶ Lady thy bou*n*tee / thy magnificence
Thy vertu / and thy grete humylitee
Ther may no tonge expresse / in no science
ffor som tyme lady / er men praye to thee 1667
Thow goost biforn / of thy benygnytee
And getest' vs / the light of thy prayere
To gyden vs / vn to thy sone so deere 1670

¶ My konnyng is so wayk' o blisful queene
ffor to declare / thy grete worthynesse
That I ne may / the weighte nat sustene
But as a child / of twelue month̄ old/ or lesse
That kan vnnethe / any' word expresse
Right so fare I / and ther fore I yow preye
Gideth my song' that I shal of yow seye

¶ Explicit prohemium ☙

¶ Here biggynneth the Prioresse tale of

¶ Alma redemptoris mater

Ther was in Asye / in a greet Citee
Amonges cristen folk' a Iewerye
Sustened / by a lord / of that contree
ffor foul vsure / and lucre of vileynye turpe lucrum
Hateful / to Crist' and to his compaignye
And thurgh the strete / men m[ygh[1]]te ryde & wende
ffor it was free / and o[. . . . . .] [1 *MS torn*]

¶ A litel scole / of cristen folk ther stood [leaf 210, back]
Doun at the ferther ende / in which ther weere
Children an heepe / yeomen of cristen blood.
That lerned in that scole / yeer by yere
Swich manere doctrine / as men vsed there
This is to seyn / to syngen and to rede
As smale children doon / in hir childhede

¶ Among thise children̄ / was a wydwes sone
A litel clergeon / .vij. yeer of age
That day by day / to scole was his wone
And eek also / wher as he say thymage
Of Cristes moder / hadde he in vsage
As hym was taught' to knele adoun and seye
His Aue Marie / as he goth by the weye

¶ Thus hath this wydwe / hir litel sone ytaught
Oure blisful lady / Cristes moder deere
To worshipe ay / and he forgat it naught
ffor sely child / wol alwey soone lere
But ay / whan I remembre / of this matere
Seint Nicholas / stant euere in my presence
ffor he so yong to Crist dide reuerence

¶ This litel child / his litel book lernynge
As he sat in the scole / at his prymer
He Alma redemptoris / herde synge
As children / lerned hir Antiphoner
And as he dorste / he drow hym ner and ner
And herkned ay / the wordes and the note
Til he the firste vers / koude al by rote

Nat wiste he / what this latyn was to seye.
ffor he so yong and tendre was of age
But on a day / his felawe gan he preye
Texpounden hym this song in his langage
Or telle hym why / this song was in vsage
This prayde he hym/ [...1]struen and declare
[. . . . . .1]re [1 *MS is torn away*]

¶ His felawe / which þat elder was than he [leaf 211]
Answerde hym thus / this song I haue herd seye
Was maked / of oure blisful lady free
Hir to salue / and eek hire for to preye
To been oure helpe / and socour / whan we deye
I kan namoore / expounde in this matere
I lerne song I kan but smal gramere

¶ And is this song maked in reuerence
Of Cristes moder / seyde this Innocent
Now certes / I wol do my diligence
To konne it al / er Cristemasse is went

Thogh þat I / for my Prymer shal be shent
And shal be beten / thries in an houre
I wol it konne / oure lady for to honoure 1733

¶ His felawe taughte hym / homward priuely
ffro day to day / til he koude it by rote
And thanne he soong it / wel and boldely
ffro word to word / acordyng with the note 1737
Twyes a day / it passed thurgh his throte
To scoleward / and homward / whan he wente
On Cristes moder / set was his entente 1740

As I haue seyd / thurgh out the Iuerye
This litel child / as he cam to and fro
fful murily / wolde he synge and crye
O Alma redemptoris / euere mo 1744
The swetnesse / his herte perced so
Of Cristes moder / that to hir to preye
He kan nat stynte / of syngyng by the weye 1747

¶ Oure firste foo / the Serpent Sathanas
That hath in Iewes herte / his waspes nest
Vp swal and seyde / o Hebrayk peple allas
Is this to yow / a thyng that is honest 1751
That swich a boy / shal walken As hym lest
In youre despit and synge of [. . .[1]]h sentence [1 MS torn]
Which is agayns / oure l[. . . . . .[1]] 1754

¶ ffro thennes forth / the Iewes han conspired [leaf 211, back]
This Innocent out of this world to chace
An homycide / ther-to han they hired
That in an Aleye / at a priuee place 1758
And as the child / gan for by for to pace
This cursed Iew / hym hente / and heeld hym faste
And kitte his throte / and in a pit hym caste 1761

¶ I seye / that in a wordrobe / they hym threwe
Wher as thise Iewes / purgen hir entraille
O cursed folk of herodes / al newe
What may / youre yuel entente yow auaille
Mordre wol out / certeyn it wol nat faille
And namely / ther as thonour of god shal sprede
The blood out cryeth / on youre cursed dede

¶ O martir sonded to virginitee
Now maystow syngen / folwyng euere in oon [*Latin note*, p. 189]
The white lamb celestial quod she
Of which / the grete Euaungelist Seint Iohn
In Pathmos wroot which seith þat they þat gon
Biforn this lamb / and synge a song al newe
That neuere carnaliter fflesshly / womman they ne knewe

¶ This poure wydwe / awaiteth al that nyght
After hir litel child / but he cam noght
ffor which as soone / as it was dayes lyght
With face pale / of drede and bisy thoght
She hath at scole / and ellis where hym soght
Til fynally / she gan so fer espie
That he last seyn was / in the Iewerie

¶ With modres pitee / in hir brest enclosed
She goth / as she were half out of hir mynde
To euery place / wheras she hath supposed
By liklyhede / hir litel child to fynde
And euere / on Cristes moder / meke and kynde
She cryde / and at the laste [. . . .[1]] she wroghte [[1] *MS torn*]
[. . . . . .[1]]ghte

She frayneth / and she prayeth pitously [leaf 212]
To euery Iew / that dwelte in thilke place
To telle hire / if hir child / wente oght forby
They seyde nay / but Ihesu of his grace

Yaf in hir thought' in with a litel space
That in that place / after hir sone she cryde
Wher he was casten / in a pit bisyde 1796

¶ O grete god / that par-fournest thy laude
By mouth of Innocentz / lo here thy myght'
This gemme of chastitee / this Emeraude
And eek of martirdom / the Ruby bright' 1800
Ther he with throte ycoruen / lay vpright'
He Alma redemptoris / gan to synge
So loude / that al the place gan to rynge 1803

¶ The cristen folk' that thurgh the strete wente
In coomen / for to wondre vp on this thyng'
And hastily / they for the Prouost sente
He cam anon / with outen tariyng' 1807
And herieth Crist' that is of heuen kyng'
And eek his moder / honour of mankynde
And after that' the Iewes leet he bynde 1810

¶ This child / with pitous lamentacioun
Vp taken was / syngynge his song alway
And with honour / of greet procession
They carien hym / vn to the nexte Abbay 1814
His moder swownyng' by his beere lay
Vnnethe myghte / the peple that was there
This newe Rachel / bryngen fro his beere [*Latin note*, p. 180]

¶ With torment' and with shameful deth echon
This Prouost' dooth thise Iewes for to sterue
That of this mordre wiste / and that anon
He nolde / no swich cursednesse obserue 1821
Yuel shal haue / that yuel wol disserue
Ther fore with wilde hors [he di']de hem drawe [' *MS torn*]
And after that' he [. . . . . .'] 1824

¶ Vp on his beere / ay lyth this Innocent' [leaf 212, back] [*Latin note*, p. 180]
Biforn the chief Auter / whil the masse laste
And after that' the Abbot' *with* his Couent'
Han sped hem / for to buryen hym ful faste
And whan they / holy water/ on hym caste
Yet spak this child / whan spreynd was holy water
And song' O alma redemptoris mater

¶ This Abbot' which *þat* was an holy man
As monkes ben / or ellis oghten be
This yonge child / to coniure he bigan
And seyde / o deere child I halsen thee
In vertu / of the holy Trinitee
Tel me / what is thy cause for to synge
Sith *þat* thy throte is kit' to my semynge

¶ My throte is kit' vn to my nekke boon
Seyde this child / and as by wey of kynde
I sholde haue dyed / ye longe tyme agoon
But Ihesu crist' as ye in bokes fynde
Wol *þat* his glorie laste / and be in mynde
And for the worshipe / of his moder deere
Yet may I synge / O alma / loude and clere

¶ This welle of mercy / Cristes moder swete
I loued alwey / as after my konnynge
And whan *þat* I my lyf' sholde forlete
To me she cam / and bad me for to synge
This Antheme / verraily in my deiynge
As ye han herd / and whan *þat* I had songe
Me thoughte / she leyde a greyn vp on my tonge

¶ Wherfore I synge / and synge moot certeyn
In honour / of that blisful mayden free
Til fro my tonge / of taken is the greyn
And after that' thus seyde she to me

My litel child / now wil I fecche thee
Whan þat the greyn is f[rom t[1]]hy tonge ytake [[1] *MS torn*]
Be nat ag[. . . . . .[1]] 1859

¶ This holy monk' this Abbot' hym mene I [leaf 213]
His tonge out caughte / and took awey the greyn
And he / yaf vp the goost ful softely
And whan this Abbot' hadde this wonder seyn 1863
Hise salte teerys / trikled doun as reyn
And gruf he fil / al flat vp on the grounde
And stille he lay / as he had leyn ybounde 1866

¶ The Couent eek/ lay on the pauement
Wepynge / and heryen cristes moder deere
And after that they ryse / and forth been went'
And toke awey this martir / from his beere 1870
And in a toumbe / of Marbilstones cleere
Enclosen they / this litel body swete
Ther he is now / god leue vs for to meete 1873

¶ O yonge Hugh̄ of Lyncoln / slayn also
With cursed Iewes / as it is notable
ffor it is / but a litel while ygo
Preye eek for vs / we synful folk vnstable 1877
That of his mercy / god so merciable
On vs / his grete mercy multiplie
ffor reuerence / of his moder Marie. Amen. 1880

¶ Here endeth / the Prioresse tale.

¶ Bihoold the myrie talkyng/ of the Hoost/. to Chaucer ☙

WHan seyd was al this myracle / eu*e*ry man
As sobre was / that wonder was to se
Til that oure hoost' iapen he bigan
And thanne at erst' he looked vp on me .i. Chaucer 1884
And seyde thus / what man artow quod he
Thow lookest' as thow woldest fynde an hare
ffor eu*e*re vp on the ground / I se thee stare 1887

¶ Approche neer / and looke vp myrily [leaf 213, back]
Now war yow sires / and lat this man haue place
He in the wast' is shape as wel as I
This were a popet' in an arm tenbrace 1891
ffor any womman / smal and fair of face
He semeth eluyssh̄ / by his contenance
ffor vn to no wight' dooth he no daliance 1894

¶ Sey now som what' syn oother folk han sayd
Telle vs a tale / of myrthe / and that anon
Hoost quod I / ne beth nat yuele ypayd
ffor oother tale / c*er*tes kan I noon 1898
But of a rym / I lerned longe agoon
Ye that is good quod he / now shul we heere
Som deyntee thyng' me thynketh by his cheere 1901

¶ Here bigynneth Chaucers tale of Thopas

[*Fit I.*]

[*Each third line is on the right of its couple, in the MS, and there are no breaks between the stanzas.*]

Listeth lordes / in good entent
And I wil telle verrayment
Of myrthe / and of solas
Al of a knyght / was fair and gent
In bataille / and in tornament
His name / was sir Thopas

¶ Yborn he was / in fer contree
In fflaundres / al biyonde the see
At Poperyng / in the place
His fader was / a man ful free
And lord he was / of that contree
As it was / goddes *grace*

¶ Sir Thopas wax / a doghty swayn
Whit was his face / as Payndemayn
His lippes reed as Rose
His rode is lyk / scarlet in grayn
As I yow telle / in good certayn
He hadde a semely nose

¶ His heer / his berd / was lyk Safrown
That to his girdel / raughte adown
Hise shoon / of Cordewane
Of Brugges / were his hosen brown
His Robe was / of syklatown
That coste many a Iane

¶ He koude hunte / at wilde deer
And ride an hawkyng' for Ryuer
With grey goshauk on honde
Ther-to he was / a good Archier
Of wrastlyng' was ther noon his pier
Ther any Ram shal stonde

¶ fful many mayde / bright in bour [leaf 214]
They moorne for hym / par amour
Whan hem were bet to slep[e]
But he was chaast' and no lechour
And sweete / as is the brambel flour
That bereth the rede hepe

¶ And so it fel / vp on a day
ffor sothe / as I yow telle may
Sir Thopas / wolde out ryde
He warth vp on / his Steede gray
And in his hand / a launcegay
A long swerd / by his syde

¶ He priketh thurgh / a fair fforest'
Ther Inne / is many a wilde best'
Ye bothe / bukke and hare
And as he priketh / North & Est'
I telle it yow / hym hadde almest'
bitydde / a sory care

¶ There spryngen herbes / grene & smale
The licorys / and Cetewale
And many a clowe Gylofre
And notemuge / to putte in Ale
Wheither it' be moyste or stale
Or / for to leye in cofre

¶ The bryddes synge / it is no nay
The Sperhauk and the Popyniay
That ioye / it was to here
The Thurstelock / made eek his lay
The wodedowue / vp on the spray
She sang ful loude & clere

¶ Sire Thopas fil / in loue longynge
Al whan he herde / the thrustel synge
And pryked / as he were wood
His fayre Steede / in his prikynge
So swatte / þat men myghte hym wrynge
His sydes / were al blood

¶ Sir Thopas eek/ so wery was
ffor prikyng/ on the softe gras
So fiers / was his corrage
That doun he leyde hym / in the plas
To make his Steede / som solas
And yaf hym / good forage

¶ O Seinte Marie / benedicite
What eyleth / this loue at me
To bynde me / so soore
Me dremed / al this nyght pardee
An Elf queene / shal my lemman be
And slepe / vnder my gore

¶ An Elf queene / wol I haue ywys
ffor in this world / no womman is
Worthy to be my make //
in towne
Alle othere wommen / I forsake
And to an Elf queene / I me take
by dale / and eek by downe

¶ In to his Sadel / he clamb anoon
And priketh ouer / style and stoon
An Elf queene / for tespye
Til he so longe / hath riden & goon
That he foond / in a pryuee woon
The contree of ffairye //
So wylde?
ffor in that contree / was ther noon [leaf 214, back]
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Neither wyf / ne childe

¶ Til þat ther cam / a greet geaunt
His name was / sire Olifaunt
A perilous man of dede
He seyde child / by Termagaunt
But if thow pryke / out of myn haunt
Anon I sle thy Steede
¶ with Mace
¶ Heere is this queene / of ffairye
With harpe & pipe / & Symphonye
dwellyng in this place

¶ The child seyde / als mote I thee
Tomorwe / wil I meete thee /
Whan I haue myn Armowre
¶ And yet I hope / *par* ma fay
That thow shalt *with* this launcegay
Abyen it ful sowre
¶ Thy Mawe
Shal I percen / if I may
Er it be fully pryme of day
ffor here shaltow ben slawe

¶ Sire Thopas / drow abak ful faste
This geant' at hym stones caste
Out of a fel staf slynge
¶ But faire escapeth / child Thopas
And al it was / thurgh goddes graas
And thurgh his fair berynge

Ȝet lesteth lordes / to my tale
Murier than the nyghtyngale'
I wol yow rowne
How sire Thopas / with sydes smale
Prikyng' ouer hyH and dale
Is come agayn to towne

¶ Hys murye men / comanded he
To make hym / bothe game and glee
ffor nedes moste he fighte
With a geant' with heuedes thre
ffor *par*amour / and Iolitee
Of oon / that shoon ful brighte

¶ Do come he seyde / my Mynstrales
And Gestours / for to tellen tales
Anon / in myn Armyng'
Of romances / that been reales
Of Popes / and of Cardynales
And eek/ of loue likyng

¶ They fette hym first' swete wyn
And Mede eek' in a Maselyn
And real Spicerye
Of gyngebred / that was ful fyn
And lycorys / and eek Comyn
With Sugre / that is trye

¶ He dide next' his white leer
Of clooth of lake / fyn & cleer
A breech / and eek a Sherte
And next his Sherte / an Aketoñ
And ouer that' an haubergeoñ
ffor percyng' of his herte

¶ And ouer that' a fyn hauberk'
Was al ywroght' of Iewes werk'
fful strong it was of plate
And ouer that / his cote Armour [leaf 215]
As whit as is / a lilie flour
In which / he wol debate

¶ His sheeld was al / of gold so reed
And ther Inne was / a bores heed
A Charbocle / by his syde
And there he swoor / on Ale and breed
How þat the geant / shal be deed
Bityde / what bityde

¶ Hise Iambeux were / of quyrboily
His swerdes shethe / of Yuory
His helm / of laton bright'
His Sadel was / of Rewel bon
His brydel / as the sonne shon
Or as the moone light'

¶ His spere was / of fyn Cipres
That bodeth werre / and no thyng pes
The heed / ful sharpe ygrounde
His Steede was / al dappel gray
It goth an Ambel / in the way
fful softely / and rounde //

In londe
¶ Lo lordes myne / here is a fit
If ye wole / any moore of it
To telle it wol I fonde 2080

[*Fit II.*]

n Ow hoold youre mouth *per* charitee
Bothe knyght and lady free
And herkneth to my spelle 2083
¶ Of bataille / and of chiualry
And of ladyes / loue drury
Anon / I wol yow telle 2086

¶ Men speken / of Romances of pris
Of Hornchild / and of Ypotys
Of Beves and Sir Gy 2089
Of Sire lybeux / and playn dam*our*
But sire Thopas / he bereth the flo*ur*
Of real Chiualry 2092

¶ His goode Steede / al he bystrood
And forth vp on his wey he glood
As Sparcle / out of the bronde 2095
¶ Vp on his Creest he bar a tour
And ther Inne stiked / a lilie flour
God shilde / his cors fro shonde 2098

¶ And for he was / a knyght auntrous
He nolde slepen / in noon hous
But liggen in his hode 2101
His brighte helm / was his wonger
And by hym / bayteth his destrer
Of herbes / fyne and goode 2104

¶ Hym self / drank water of the well
As dide the knyght Sire Percyuell
So worly vnder wede
Til on a day 2108

¶ Here the hoost/ stynteth Chaucer of his tale of Thopas / and biddeth hym / telle another tale.

Namoore of this / for goddes dignytee
Quod oure Hoost for thow makest me
So wery / of thy verray lewednesse [leaf 215, back]
That also wisly / god my soule blesse 2112
Myne erys aken / of thy drasty speche
Now swich a rym / the deuel I biteche
This may wel be / rym dogerel quod he
¶ Why so quod I / why wiltow lette me 2116
Moore of my tale / than another man
Syn that it is / the beste rym I kan
¶ By god quod he / for pleynly at o word
Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a tord 2120
Thow doost noght ellis / but despendest tyme
Sire at o word / thow shalt no lenger ryme
Lat se / wher thow kanst tellen aught in geste
Or tel in Prose / som what at the leeste 2124
In which ther be som myrthe / or som doctrine
¶ Gladly quod I / by goddes swete pyne
I wol yow telle / a litel thyng in prose
That oghte like yow / as I suppose 2128
Or ellis certes / ye be to daungerous
It is a moral tale vertuous
Al be it toold som tyme in sondry wise
Of sondry folk / as I shal yow deuyse 2132
¶ As thus / ye woot þat euery Euangelist
That telleth vs / the peyne of Ihesu Crist
Ne seith nat alle thyng as his felawe dooth
But nathelees / hir sentence is al sooth 2136
And alle acorden / as in hir sentence
Al be ther / in hir tellyng difference

ffor somme of hem seyn moore / & somme seyn lesse
Whan they / his pitous passion expresse
I mene / of Mark / Mathew / Luk and Iohn
But doutelees / hir sentence is al oon
¶ Therfore / lordynges alle / I yow biseche
If þat ye thynke / I varie / as in my speche
As thus / thogh þat I telle somwhat moore
Of prouerbes / than ye han herd bifore
Comprehended / in this litel tretys heere
To enforcen with / theffect of my matere
And thogh I nat the same wordes seye
As ye han herd / yet to yow alle I preye
Blameth me nat / for as in my sentence [leaf 216]
Shul ye / nowher / fynden difference
ffro the sentence / of this tretys lite
After the which / this myry tale I write
And therfore herkneth / what þat I shal seye
And lat me tellen / al my tale I preye

[*There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines.* ‖ *stands for a triangular pause-mark in the MS.*]

[*Hengwrt MS, on leaf* 216.]

¶ Here bigynneth chaucers tale of Melibeus ☙

A [2157] yong' man whilom / called Melibeus myghty and riche / bigat vp on his wif / þat called was Prudence / a doghter / which þat called was Sophie ‖

[2158] vp on a day bifel / þat he for his desport' is went in to the feeldes / hym to pleye / [2159] his wif & eek his doghter / hath he laft inwith his hous / of which the dores weren faste yshette / [2160] thre of his olde foos / han it espied / & setten laddres / to the walles of his hous / and by wyndowes ben entred / [2161] & betten his wif / & wounded his doghter / *with* fyue mortal woundes in fyue sondry places / [2162] this is to seyn / in hir feet/ in hir handes / in hir erys / in hir nose / and in hir mouth / and lefton hire for deed & wenten awey

[2163] Whan Melibeus retourned was in to his hous / & seigh al this meschief / he lyk a mad man rentynge his clothes / gan to wepe / and crye

[2164] Prudence his wyf / as ferforth as she dorste / bisoughte hym / of his wepyng' for to stynte / [2165] but nat for-thy / he gan to crye & wepen euere lenger the moore

[2166] ¶ This noble wif Prudence remembred hire / vp-on the sentence of Ouyde / in his book' þat cleped is / the remedie of loue / wher as he seith / [2167] he is a fool / that destourbeth the moder / to wepe / in the deth of hir child' / til she haue wept' hir fille / as for a certeyn tyme / [2168] and thanne shal man doon his diligence *with* amyable wordes / hire to reconforte / and preye hire / of

¶ Ouidius de remedio amoris

hir wepyng for to stynte / [2169] for which reson / this noble wyf Prudence / suffred hir housbonde / for to wepe & crye / as for a certeyn space / [2170] and whan she say hir tyme / she seyde hym in this wise ¶ Allas my lord quod she / why make ye your self for to be lyk a fool / [2171] for sothe / it aperteneth nat to a wys man / to maken swich a sorwe / [2172] yowre doghter / with the *grace* of god / shal warisshe and escape [2173] [1]And al were it so / þat she right now were deed / ye ne oghte nat as for hir deth / youre self destroye [2174] ¶ Senec seith / the wise man shal nat take to greet disconfort for the deth of his children / [2175] but *certes* / he sholde suffren it in pacience / as wel / as he abideth the deth / of his owene *propre person*e

[s] neca

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus / answerde anon & seyde ¶ What man quod he / sholde of his wepyng stynte / that hath so gret a cause for to wepe || [2177] Ihesu *crist*/ oure lord hym self / wepte / for the deth / of lazarus his freend [2178] ¶ Prudence answerde ¶ Certes wel I woot attempree wepynge / is no thyng defended / to hym þat sorweful is / amonges folk in sorwe / but it is rather / graunted hym to wepe [2179] ¶ The Apostle Poul / vn to the Romayns writeth || Man shal reioysse *with* hem þat maken ioye / and wepen / *with* swich folk as wepen || [2180] but thogh attempree wepyng be graunted / out*rageous* wepyng *certes* is defended || [2181] Mesure of wepyng sholde be considered / after the loore þat techeth vs Senec [2182] ¶ Whan þat thy freend is deed quod he / lat nat thyne eyen / to moyste ben of terys / ne to muche drye / al thogh the teerys come to thyne eyen / lat hem nat falle / [2183] And whan thou hast forgoon thy freend / do diligence / to geten another freend / and this is moore wysdom / than for to wepe for thy freend / which þat thou hast lorn / for ther-Inne / is no boote / [2184] And ther-fore / if ye gou*erne* yow by sapience / put awey sorwe / out of youre herte / [2185] ¶ Remembre yow / þat Ihe*sus* Syrak seith ||

[¶] *qualiter* Ihe*sus christus* flenit p*ro*pter mortem lazari.

¶ Ap*osto*lus ad Romanos.

A man þat is ioyous and glad in herte /. it hym conserueth florisshynge in his age / but soothly / sorweful herte / maketh his bones drye || [2186] He seith eek thus /. þat sorwe in herte / sleeth ful many a man || [2187] Salomon seith / that right as Moththes in the Shepes flees / anoyeþ to the clothes / and the smale wormes to the tree /. right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte / [2188] wher-fore / vs oghte as wel in the deth of oure children / as in the losse of oure goodes temporels / haue pacience ||

[2189] Remembre yow / vp on the pacient Iob / whan he hadde lost his children / and his temporel substance and in his body endured & receyued ful many a greuous tribulacion / yet seide he thus || [2190] Oure lord / hath [sente it me / oure lord hath] biraft it me / right so as oure lord hath wold / right so it is doon / yblessed be / the name of oure lord [2191] ¶ To thise forseyde thynges / answerde Melibeus / vn to his wif Prudence || Alle thy wordes quod he been sothe / & ther to *pro*fitable / but trewely / myn herte is troubled *with* this sorwe / so greuosly þat I noot what to doon [2192] ¶ lat calle quod Prudence / thy trewe freendes alle / & thy lynage / whiche þat [1]ben wise / telleth youre cas / & herkneth what they seye in conseylynge / & yow gouerne / after hir sentence [2193] ¶ Salomon seith / Werk alle thy thynges by conseil / & thow shalt neu*er*e repente //

[2194] Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence / this Melibeus leet callen a greet congregacioũ of folk / [2195] as Sirurgiens / Phisiciens / olde folk and yonge / & so*mm*e of hise olde enemys reconsiled / as by hir semblant to his loue / & in to his *gr*ace / [2196] And ther-with-al / þer coomen so*mm*e of hise neghebores / þat diden hym reu*er*ence / moore for drede than for loue / as it happeth ofte || [2197] ¶ Ther coomen also / ful manye subtile flaterers / and wise Aduocatz lerned in the lawe /

[2198] And whan this folk / togydre assembled weren / this Melibeus in sorweful wise / shewed hem his cas /

[2199] and by the manere of his speche / it semed þat in herte / he baar a cruel Ire / redy to doon vengeance vp on his foos / and sodeynly desired / þat the werre sholde bigynne / [2200] but nathelees / yet axed he hir conseil vp on this matere || [2201] A Sirurgien / by licence and assent' of swiche as were wise / vp roos / & vn to Melibeus / seyde as ye may heere

[2202] ¶ Sire quod he / as to vs Sirurgiens aperteneth that we do to euery wight / the beste þat we kan / where as we be withholden / and to oure pacientz / þat we do no damage / [2203] wher-fore / it happeth many tyme & ofte / þat whan twey men han euerich wounded oother / o same Sirurgien heeleth hem bothe / [2204] wher-fore vn to oure Art' it is nat pertinent' to norice werre / ne parties to supporte / [2205] but certes / as to the warisshynge of youre doghter / al be it so / þat she perilously be wounded / we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to nyght' þat with the grace of god / she shal be hool & sound / as soone as is possible [2206] ¶ Almoost' right in the same wise / the Phisiciens answerden / saue þat they seyden / a fewe wordes moore || [2207] that right as maladyes ben cured by hir contraries / right so shal man warisshe werre by vengeance [2208] ¶ hise neghebores ful of enuye / hise feyned freendes / þat semeden reconsiled / hise flaterers [2209] maden semblant of wepyng' and empeyred / & agregged muchel of this matere / in preisynge gretly Melibe / of myght' of power / of richesse / & of freendes / despisynge / the power of hise Aduersaries / [2210] and seyden outrely / þat he anon / sholde wreke hym on hise foos / and bigynne werre

[2211] ¶ Vp roos thanne an Aduocat þat was wys / by leue & by conseil / of othere þat weren wise / and seyde || [2212] Lordynges / the nede for the which we ben assembled in this place / is ful heuy thyng' and an [1]heigh matere / [2213] by cause of the wrong' & of the wikkednesse / that hath be doon / and eek by reson of the grete damages / þat

in tyme comynge been possible to fallen / for the same cause / [2214] And ek by reson / of the grete richesse & power of the parties bothe / [2215] for the whiche resons / it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matere [2216] ¶ wherfore Melibeus / this is oure sentence || we conseile yow abouen alle thyng'. þat right anon thow do diligence in kepynge of thy propre persone / in swich a wise / þat thow ne wante noon espye / ne wacche / thy body. for to saue [2217] ¶ And after þat we conscille / þat in thyn hous / thow sette suffisant garnyson / so þat they may as wel / thy body / as thyn hous defende [2218] ¶ But certes / for to moeue werre / ne sodeynly for to doon vengeance / we may nat deme in so litel tyme / þat it were profitable / [2219] Wherfore / we axen leyser & espace / to haue deliberacioñ in this cas to deme / [2220] for the commune prouerbe seyth this / he þat soone demeth / soone shal repente [2221] ¶ And eek men seyn / þat thilke Iuge is wys / þat soone vnderstondeth a matere / & Iuggeth by leyser / [2222] for al be it so þat al taryyng' be anoyful / algates it is nat to repreue / in yeuyng of Iuggement' / ne in vengeance takyng'. whan it is suffisant and resonable / [2223] and that shewed oure lord Ihesu crist' by ensample / for whan þat the womman þat was taken in auoutrye / was broght in his presence / to knowen / what sholde be doon with hir persone / al be it' þat he wiste wel hym self / what þat he wolde answere / yet ne wolde he / nat answere sodeynly / but he wolde haue deliberacioñ / and in the ground / he wroot twies / [2224] and by thise causes / we axen deliberacion / and we shul thanne / by the grace of god conseille thee / thyng' that shal be profitable /

[2225] ¶ Vp stirten thanne / the yonge folk atones / and the mooste partie of that compaignye / han scorned / this olde wise man / and bigonnen to make noyse / & seyden / that [2226] right so / as whil þat Iren is hoot' men sholde smyte' right so sholde men / wreken hir wronges / whil

þat they been / fresshe & newe / and *with* loud voys / they criden. Werre. werre ||

[2227] Vp roos tho. oon of thise olde wise / & *with* his hand made contenance / þat men sholde holden hem stille / and yeuen hym audience [2228] ¶ Lordynges quod he / ther is ful many a man þat crieth werre. werre. þat woot ful litel / what werre amounteth || [2229] Werre at his bigynnyng hath so greet an entree & so large [1]þat eu*er*y wight may entre whan hym liketh / & lightly fynde werre || [2230] But certes what ende / þat ther-of shal falle / it is noght light to knowe || [2231] for soothly / whan þat werre is ones bigonne / ther is ful many a child / vnborn of his moder / þat shal sterue yong by cause of thilke werre / or ellis lyue in sorwe / & dye in wrecchednesse / [2232] and ther fore / er þat any werre be bigonne / men moste haue gret conseil / & gret deliberacion [2233] ¶ And whan this olde man / wende to enforcen his tale by resons / wel neigh alle atones / bigonne they to rise / for to breken his tale / and beden hym ful ofte / hise wordes for to abregge / [2234] for sothly / he þat *pr*echeth to hem / þat listen nat heren hise wordes / hys sarmon / hem anoyeth || [2235] ffor Ih*esus* Syrak seith /. That Musyk in wepynge / is a-noyous thyng This is to seyn / As muche auaileth / to speken biforn folk to whiche his speche anoyeth / as it is / to synge biforn hym þat wepeth || [2236] And whan this wise man say þat hym wanted audience / al shamefast he sette hym doun agayn || [2237] ffor Salomon seith / ther as thow / ne mayst haue non audience / enforce thee nat to speke [2238] ¶ I se wel quod this wise man / þat the co*m*une p*r*ou*er*be is sooth || that good conseil wanteth / whan it is moost nede //

[2239] Yet hadde this Melibeus / in his conseil many folk / þat p*r*iuely in his ere / conseiled hym certeyn thyng. and conseiled hym the cont*r*arie / in general audience

[2240] ¶ Whan Melibeus hadde herd / þat the gretteste

party of his conseil / were acorded / þat he sholde make werre / anon he consented / to hir conseilyng' & fully affermed hir sentence / [2241] ¶ Thanne dame Prudence / whan þat she say / how þat hyr housbonde / shoope hym / for to wreke hym on his foos / & to bigynne werre / she in ful humble wise / whan she say hir tyme / seyde hym thise wordes [2242] ¶ My lord quod she / I you biseche / as hertely as I dar & kan / ne haste yow nat to faste / and for alle gerdons / as yif me audience ‖ [2243] ffor Piers Alfonce seith /. who so þat dooth to thee / outher good / or harm / haste thee nat' to quiten it / for in this wise / thy freend wol abyde / and thyn enemy / shal the lenger lyue in drede ‖ [2244] The prouerbe seith / he hasteth wel / þat wysly kan abide / and in wikked haste / is no profit'

[2245] ¶ This Melibe / answerde vn to his wyf Prudence ‖ I purpose nat quod he / to werken by thy conseil / for many causes and resons / ffor certes euery wight' wolde holde me thanne a fool / [2246] this is to seyn / If I for thy conseilyng' wolde chaunge [1]thynges þat ben ordeyned / & affermed / by so manye wise [2247] ¶ Secoundly I seye / þat alle wommen ben wikke / and noon good of hem alle / for of a thousand men / seith Salomon / I foond o good man / but certes of alle wommen / good womman foond I neuere [2248] ¶ And also certes / if I gouerned me by thy conseil / it sholde seme / þat I hadde yeue to thee ouer me the maistrie / and goddes forbode / þat it so were / [2249] ffor Ihesus Syrak seith / that if the wyf haue maistrie / she is contrarious / to hir housbonde [2250] ¶ And Salomon seith / Neuere in thy lyf / to thy wyf / ne to thy child / ne to thy freend / ne yif no power ouer thy self / ffor bettre it were / þat thy children axen of thy persone thynges þat hem nedeth / than thow see thy self' in the handes of thy children [2251] ¶ And also / if I wolde werke by thy conseilyng' certes my conseil / moste som tyme be secree / til it were tyme / þat it moste be

knowe / and this ne may nat be [2252. *Car il est escript: la jenglerie des femmes ne puet riens céler fors ce qu'elle ne scet.* [2253] *Après, le philosophe dit: en mauvais conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes. Pour ces raisons je ne doy point user de ton conseil.* MS of the first half of the 15th century in 'Le Ménagier de Paris,' i. 193, ed. 1846.]
[2254] ¶ Whan dame Prudence ful debonairly & *with* gret pacience hadde herd / al that hir housbonde liked for to seye / thanne axed she of hym / licence for to speke / and seyde in this wise [2255] ¶ My lord quod she / as to youre firste reson / certes it may lightly been answered / for I seye þat it is no folie to chaunge conseil / whan the thyng is chaunged / or ellis / whan the thyng semeth oother weys / than it was biforn [2256] ¶ And moore ouer I seye / þat thogh þat ye han sworn & bihight to parfourne youre emprise / & nathelees ye weyue to parfourne thilke same emprise by iuste cause / men sholde nat seyn therfore þat ye were a lyere / ne forsworn / [2257] for the book seith / þat the wise man / maketh no lesynge whan he turneth his corage to the bettre / [2258] And al be it so / þat youre emprise be establissed & ordeyned / by gret multitude of folk / yet thar ye nat accomplice thilke same ordinance / but yow like / [2259] for the trouthe of thynges & the profit ben rather founde in fewe folk / þat ben wise & ful of reson / than by gret multitude of folk || ther euery man crieth & clatereth what þat hym liketh / soothly swich multitude / is nat honeste [2260] ¶ And to the seconde resoñ / where as ye seyn / þat alle wommen ben wikke / saue youre grace / certes ye despise alle wommen in this wyse / and he þat al despiseth / al displeseth / as seith the book. [2261] and Senec seith / that who so wole haue Sapience / shal no man dispreise / but he shal gladly teche / the science þat he kan / withoute presumpcion or pride / [2262] and swiche thynges / as he noght ne kan / he shal nat ben ashamed to lerne hem & enquere [1]of lasse

folk than hym self [2263] ¶ And sire / þat ther hath be ful many a good wo*m*man / may lightly be preued / [2264] for ce*r*tes sire / oure lord Ihesu crist wolde neuere han descended / to be born of a wo*m*man / if alle wo*m*men hadde be wikke / [2265] And after that for the grete bo*u*ntee þat is in wo*m*men / oure lord Ihesu c*r*ist whan he was risen fro deth to lyf / appered rather to a womman / than to his apostles / [2266] And though þat Salomon seith / þat he ne foond neuere womman good / it folweth nat therfore / þat alle wommen ben wikke / [2267] for thogh þat he ne foond no good wo*m*man / ce*r*tes many another man / hath founde many a wo*m*man ful good and trewe || [2268] Or ellis p*er* auenture / the entente of Salomon / was this / þat as in sou*er*eyn bo*u*ntee / he foond no womman / [2269] this is to seyn / þat ther is no wight þat hath sou*er*eyn bo*u*ntee / saue god allone / as he hym self recordeth / in his Eua*n*gelie / [2270] for ther nys no creature so good / þat hym ne wanteth som what of the p*er*feccioñ of god / þat is his makere [2271] ¶ Youre thridde reson is this / ye seyn / þat if ye gou*er*ne yow by my conseil / it sholde seme / þat ye hadde yeue me the maistrie and the lordshipe / ouer youre p*er*sone [2272] Sire sauf youre g*r*ace / it is nat so / for if so were / þat no man sholde be conseiled / but oonly of hem / þat hadde lordshipe & maistrie of his p*er*sone / men wolde nat ben conseiled so ofte / [2273] for soothly thilke man þat axeþ conseil of a purpos / yet hath he free choys / wheither he wole werke by that conseil / or noon [2274] ¶ And as to youre ferþe reson / ther ye seyn þat the Ianglerye of wo*m*men / kan hide thynges that they woot nat / as who seith / þat a womman kan nat hide that þat she woot. [2275] Sire thise wordes been vnderstonde of wo*m*men þat ben Iangleresses & wikked / [2276] of whiche wo*m*men men seyn / þat thre thynges / dryuen a man out of his hous / that is to seyn / Smoke / droppyng of reyn / & wikked wyues / [2277] and

of swiche wommen seith Salomon / þat it were bettre dwellen in desert' than with a womman þat is riotous / [2278] and sire by youre leue / þat am nat .I. / [2279] for ye han ful ofte assayed / my grete silence & my grete pacience / and eek how wel þat I kan hiden & hele thynges / þat men oghten secrely to hyde [2280] ¶ And soothly / as to youre fifthe reson / wher as ye seyn / þat in wikked conseil / wommen venquysse men / god woot' thilke reson / stant heere in no stede || [2281] ffor vnderstond now /. ye axen conseil / to do wikkednesse / [2282] and if ye wol werke wikkednesse / and youre wyf restreyneþ þilke wikked [1]purpos / & ouercometh yow by reson and by good conseil / [2283] certes youre wyf oghte rather be preysed / than yblamed || [2284] Thus sholde ye vnderstonde the Philosophre / þat seith / In wikked conseil / wommen venquyssen hir housbondes [2285] ¶ And ther as ye blamen alle wommen / & hir resons / I shal shewe by manye ensamples / þat many a womman hath be ful good / and yet ben / & hir conseils holsom & profitable [2286] ¶ Eke som men han seyd / þat the conseilyng of wommen / is outher to deere / or ellis to litel of prys || [2287] but al be it so / þat ful many a womman is badde / & hir conseil vile & noght worth: yet han men founde / ful many a good womman & ful discrete & wys in conseilynge [2288] ¶ Lo Iacob / by conseil of his moder Rebekka / wan the beneyson of Ysaak his fader / and the lordshipe ouer alle his bretheren [2289] ¶ Iudith by hir good conseil: deliuered the Citee of Bethulye in which she dwelled / out of þe handes of Olofernus þat hadde it biseged / & wolde it al destroye [2290] ¶ Abigail / deliuered Nabal hir housbonde / fro Dauid the kyng þat wolde han slayn hym / & apaised the Ire of the kyng' by hir wit' & by hir good conseilyng' [2291] ¶ Hester by hir good conseil / enhaunced gretly the peple of god in the regne of Assuerus the kyng'. [2292] And the same bountee in good conseilyng' of

many a good wo*m*man / may men telle [2293] ¶ And moore ouer / whan *þat* oure lord / hadde creat Adam oure forme fader / he seyde in this wise / [2294] It is nat goode to be / a man allone / make we to hym an help / semblable to hym self / [2295] ¶ Heere may ye se / *þat* if *þat* wommen were nat goode / & hir conseil / good & *p*rofitable / [2296] oure lord god of heuene / wolde neither han wroght hem / ne called hem help of man / but rather / confusion of man ‖ [2297] And ther seyde ones a clerk[e] in two vers [1]¶ What is bettre than gold / Iaspre / What is bettre than Iaspre / wisdom ‖ [2298] And what is bettre than wisdom / Wo*m*man / and what is bettre than good Womman / no thyng [2299] ¶ And sire / by manye of othere resons may ye seen / *þat* manye wo*m*men ben goode / & hir conseil good & *p*rofitable? [2300] And ther fore sire / if ye wol truste to my conseil / I shal restore yow youre doghter / hool & sound / [2301] and eek / I wol doon to yow so muche / *þat* ye shul haue honour in this cause?

[2302] ¶ Whan Melibe hadde herd the wordes / of his wyf Prudence / he seyde thus [2303] ¶ I se wel / *þat* the word of Salomon / is sooth ‖. he seith / *þat* wordes *þat* ben spoken discretly by ordinance / beth honycombes / for they yeue swetnesse to the soule / & holsomnesse to the body ‖ [2304] And wyf / by cause of the swete [2]wordes / and eek[e] for I haue assayed & preued / thy grëte sapience & thy grete trouthe / I wol gouerne me by thy conseil / in alle thyng[e]

[2305] ¶ Now sire / quod dame Prudence / and syn ye vouche sauf/ to been gou*e*rned by my conseil / I wol enforme yow / how ye shal gou*e*rne yow self/ in chesynge of youre conseilou*r*s [2306] ¶ Ye shal first in alle youre werkes / mekely biseken to the heighé god / *þat* he wol be youre conseillour / [2307] & shapeth yow to swich entente / *þat* he yeue yow conseil / & confort[e] as taughte Thobie his sone ‖ [2308] At alle tymes / thow shalt blesse

[1 *Note at bottom of leaf* 219:—Auro quid melius. / iaspis? quid iaspis. sensus. Sensu quid. / Mulier? quid Mulliere. / nichil?

god & praye hym to dresse thy weyes / and looke þat alle thy conseils ben in hym for euere moore [2309] ¶ Seint Iame eek seith || If any of yow / haue nede of Sapience / axe it of god / [2310] and afterward thanne shal ye take conseil in your self / & examyne wel youre thoghtes / of swiche thynges as yow thynketh / þat is best for youre profit [2311] and thanne shal ye dryue fro youre herte / thre thynges / that been contrariouse to good conseil / [2312] that is to seyn / Ire / Coueitise / & hastynesse

[2313] ¶ ffirst he þat axeth conseil of hym self / certes he moste be with-outen Ire / for many causes [2314] ¶ The firste is this || he þat hath greet Ire & wrathe in hym self / he weneth alwey þat he may do thyng þat he may nat do || [2315] And secoundly / he þat is Irous & wroþ / he ne may nat wel deme / [2316] and he þat may nat wel deme / may nat wel conseille || [2317] The thridde is this / that he þat is Irous & wroþ as seith Senek ne may nat speke / but blameful thynges / [2318] and with hise viciouse wordes / he stireth oother folk to angre / & to Ire // [2319] And eek sire / ye moste dryue coueitise / out of youre herte / [2320] ffor the Apostle seith / þat Coueitise / is the roote of alle harmes / [2321] and trust wel / þat a coueitous man ne kan nat deme / ne thenke / but oonly to fulfille the ende of his coueitise / [2322] & certes / that ne may neuere been acompliced / for euere the moore habundance þat he hath of richesse / the moore he desireth [2323] ¶ And sire / ye moste also / dryue out of youre herte / hastifnesse / for certes [2324] ye may nat deme for þe beste / a sodeyn thoght þat falleth in youre herte / but ye moste auyse yow on it ful ofte [2325] for as ye herde her biforn / the comune prouerbe is this / that he / þat soone demeth / soone repenteth

[2326] Sire ye ne ben nat alwey / in lyke disposicioñ / [2327] for certes / som thyng þat som tyme semeth to yow / þat it is good for to do / another tyme / it semeth to yow the contrarie /

[2328] whan ye han taken conseil in your self / and han demed by good deliberacioñ/ swich thyng/ as yow semeth best' [2329] ¶ Thanne rede I yow / þat ye kepe it secree / [2330] biwrey nat youre conseil / to no *per*sone / but if so be þat ye wenen [1] sikerly / þat thurgh yowre bywreyyng' youre condicioñ shal ben to yow moore *pro*fitable || [2331] ffor Ihe*sus* Syrak seith || Neither to thy foo ne to thy freend / discou*ere* nat thy secree / ne thy folie / [2332] for they wol yeue yow audience / & lokyng' & supportacioñ in thy p*re*sence / & scorne thee in thyn absence [2333] ¶ Another clerk seith / þat scarsly shaltow fynden any *per*sone / þat may kepe conseil secrely [2334] ¶ The book seith / whil þat thow kepest thy conseil in thyn herte / thow kepest it in thy p*ri*son / [2335] And whan thow biwreyest thy conseil to any wight' he holdeth thee in his snare / [2336] And therfore yow is bettre to hide youre conseil in youre herte / than preyen hym / to whom ye haue biwreyed youre conseil / þat he wol kepen it' cloos & stille [2337] ¶ ffor Seneca seith / If so be / þat thou ne mayst nat' thyn owene conseil hyde / how dorstow preyen any oother wight'. thy conseil secrely to kepe || [2338] But nathelees / if thow wene sikerly / þat thy biwreyyng' of thy conseil to a *per*sone / wol maken thy condicion / to stonden in the bettre plyt' thanne shaltow telle hym thy conseil / in this wise [2339] ¶ ffirst thow shalt make no semblant/ wheither thee were leu*ere* / pees or werre / or this / or that / ne shewe hym nat thy wyl & thyn entente / [2340] for trust wel þat co*mun*ely / thise conseillours ben flat*er*ers / [2341] namely / the conseillours of grete lordes / [2342] for they enforcen hem alwey / rather to speke plesante wordes / enclynynge to the lordes lust' than wordes þat ben trewe / or p*ro*fitable / [2343] And therfore men seyn / þat the riche man hath selde good conseil / but if he haue it of hym self / [2344] And after that' thow shalt considere thy freendes / & thyne enemys / [2345] And as touchynge thy freendes / thow shalt con-

sidere / whiche of hem þat been moost feithfulle / & moost wise / & eldest' & moost approued in conseillyng' [2346] and of hem / shaltow axe thy conseil / as the cas requyreth

[2347] ¶ I seye / þat first ye shul clepe to youre conseyl / youre freendes / þat ben trewe || [2348] ffor Salomon seith / þat right' as the herte of a man / deliteth in sauour þat is soote: right so the conseil· of trewe freendes / yeueth swetnesse to the soule / [2349] ¶ He seith also / ther may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend / [2350] for *certes* / gold ne siluer / ben noght so muche worth / as the goode wyl / of a trewe freend || [2351] And eek he seith / þat a trewe freend is a strong defense / who so þat it fyndeth / certes he fyndeth a gret tresor [2352] ¶ Thanne shul ye eek considere / if þat youre trewe freendes been discrete & wise / for the book seith || Axe alwey thy conseil / of hem þat been wise / [2353] And by this same 'reson / shul ye clepen to youre conseil / of yowre freendes / þat ben of age / swiche as han seighen / & ben expert' of manye thynges / & ben approued in conseilynges / [2354] ffor the book' seiþ / þat in olde men is the sapience / and in longe tyme the prudence [2355] ¶ And Tullius seith / þat grete thynges / ne ben nat ay acompliced by strengthe / ne by delyuernesse of body / but by good conseil / by Auctoritee of persones / & by Science / the whiche thre thynges / ne been nat fieble by age / but certes they enforcen / and encressen day by day [2356] And thanne shal ye kepe this / for a general rule || ffirst shal ye clepe to youre conseil / a fewe of youre freendes / þat ben especiale || [2357] ffor Salomon seith / manye freendes / haue thow / but among a thousand / chees thee oon / to be thy conseillour / [2358] for al be it so / þat thow first ne telle thy conseil / but to a fewe / thow mayst afterward telle it to mo folk' if it be nede / [2359] but looke alwey þat thy conseillours haue thilke thre condicions / þat I haue seyd

bifore / that is to seye / þat they be trewe / wise / *and* of old exp*e*rience / [2360] And werk nat alwey in euery nede / by o conseillour allone / for som tyme bihoueth it' to be conseiled by manye / [2361] for Salomon seith / Saluacion of thynges / is wher as ther ben manye conseilours

[2362] ¶ Now sith þat I haue told yow / of which folk ye sholde be conseilled / now wol I teche yow / which conseil ye oghte eschue [2363] ¶ ffirst' ye shul eschue / the conseillyng of fooles / for Salomon seith / take no conseil of a fool / for he ne kan nat conseille / but after his owene lust' and his affeccioñ / [2364] ¶ The book seith / that the p*ro*pretee of a fool is this || he trowe þ lightly / harm of euery wight' & lightly troweth alle bou*n*tee in hym self // [2365] Tow shalt eek eschue / the conseillyng of alle flaterers / swiche as enforcen hem rather to preise youre p*er*sone by flaterye / than for to telle yow the sooth-fastnesse of thynges

[2366] ¶ Wherfore Tullius seith / Among alle the pestilences þat been in frendshipe / the gretteste is flaterye / And therfore is it moore nede / þat thow eschue & drede flaterers / than any oother peple || [2367] The book seith / thow shalt rather drede & flee fro the swete wordes / of flaterynge preiseres / than fro the egre wordes of thy freend / that seith thee thy sothes [2368] ¶ Salomon seith / that the wordes of a flaterere / is a Snare to cacchen Innocentz || [2369] He seith also / þat he þat speketh to his freend / wordes of swetnesse / and of [1]plesance / setteth a Net biforn his feet' to cacchen hym || [2370] And therfore / seith Tullius || Enclyne nat thyne erys to flatereres / ne tak no conseil / of wordes of flaterye [2371] ¶ And Caton seith || Auyse thee wel / & eschue wordes of swetnesse & of plesance [2372] ¶ And eek thow shalt eschue / the conseillyng of thynne olde enemys þat ben reconsiled || [2373] The book seith / that no wight retourneth saufly in to the

grace of his olde enemy || [2374] And Ysope seith / Ne trust nat to hem / to whiche / thow hast had som tyme werre / or enemytee / ne telle hem nat thy conseil || [2375] And Seneca / telleth the cause why || It may nat be seith he / that where as greet fyr / hath longe tyme endured / þat ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse || [2376] And ther fore seith Salomon || In thyn olde foo / trust neuere / [2377] for sikerly / thogh thyn enemy be reconsiled / & maketh thee / cheere of humylitee / & louteth to thee with his heed / ne trust hym neuere / [2378] for certes / he maketh thilke feyned humylitee / moore for his profit than for any loue of thy persone / by cause þat he demeth / to haue victorie ouer thy persone / by swich feyned continance / the which victorie / he myghte nat haue / by strif or werre [2379] ¶ And Peter Alfonce seith || Make no felaweshipe / with thyne olde enemys / for if thow do hem bountee / they wol peruerten it in to wikkednesse [2380] ¶ And eek thou most eschue / the conseillyng of hem þat ben thy seruantz / & beren thee gret reuerence / for perauenture / they seyn it moore / for drede than for loue / [2381] & therfore / seith a Philosophre / in this wise || Ther is no wight perfitly trewe / to hym / þat he to soore dredeth || [2382] And Tullius seith / Ther nys no myght so gret / of any Emperour / þat longe may endure / but if he haue moore loue of the peple than drede [2383] ¶ Thou shalt also eschue the conseillyng of folk þat ben dronkelewe || for they ne kan no conseil hyde || [2384] ffor Salomon seith / Ther is no priuetee / ther as regneth dronkenesse [2385] ¶ Ye shal also han in suspect the conseilyng of swich folk as conseile yow a thyng priuely / & conseille yow / the contrarie openly || [2386] ffor Cassiodorie seith / That it is a manere sleighte to hyndre / whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly / and werketh pryuely the contrarie [2387] ¶ Thow shalt also haue in suspect the conseilyng of wikked folk || ffor the book seith / The conseilyng of wikked folk is alwey ful

of fraude || [2388] And Dauid seith || Blisful is that man / þat hath nat folwed the conseilyng of sherewes [2389] ¶ Thow shalt also eschue [1]the conseilyng' of yong folk / for hir conseil is nat rype

[2390] ¶ Now sire / sith I haue shewed yow / of which folk' ye shul take youre conseil / and of which folk' ye schul folwe the conseil ||. [2391] now wol I teche yow / how ye shul examyne youre conseil / after the doctrine of Tullius [2392] ¶ In the examynynge thanne of youre conseillour / ye shul considere many thynges // [2393] Alderfirst / thou shalt considere / þat in thilke thyng' þat thow purposest' / & vp on what thyng' thow wolt haue conseil / þat verray trouthe / be seyd & conserued / this is to seyn / telle trewely thy tale / [2394] for he þat seith fals / may nat wel be conseiled / in that cas / of which he lyeth [2395] ¶ And after this / thow shalt considere / the thynges þat acorden / to that thow purposest for to do / by thy conseillours / if reson acorde ther to / [2396] and eek' if thy myght' may atteyne ther to / and if the moore part' & the bettre part' of thy conseillours / acorde ther to / or no [2397] ¶ Thanne shaltow considere / what thyng shal folwe of that conseilyng' as hate / pees / werre / grace / profit' or damage / & many othere thynges / [2398] And in alle thise thynges / thow shalt chese the beste / and weyue alle othere thynges [2399] ¶ Thanne shaltow considere / of what roote is engendred the matere of thy conseil / and what fruyt it may conceyue & engendre [2400] ¶ Thow shalt eek considere alle thise causes / from whennes they ben sprongen || [2401] And whan ye haue examyned youre conseil / as I haue seyd / & which partie is the bettre & moore profitable / & han approued it / by manye wise folk' & olde / [2402] thanne shaltow considere / if thou mayst parforme it / & maken of it' a good ende [2403] ¶ ffor reson wol nat' þat any man sholde bigynne a thyng'. but if he myghte parforme it / as hym oghte || [2404] Ne no wight sholde

take vp on hym so heuy charge / þat he myghte nat beren it || [2405] ffor the prouerbe seith /. he þat to muche embraceth / destreyneth litel || [2406] And Caton seith / Assay to do swich thyng' as thow hast power to doon / lest þat the charge / oppresse thee so soore / þat thee bihoueth / to weyue thyng' þat thow hast bigonne || [2407] And if so be / þat thow be in doute / wheither thow mayst parfourne a thyng / or noon: chees rather to suffre / than bigynne / [2408] || And Peter Alfonce seith ¶ If thow hast myght to doon a thyng' of which thow most repente / it is bettre / nay / than ye / [2409] this is to seyn / þat thee is bettre / to holde thy tonge stille / than for to speke [2410] ¶ Thanne may ye vnderstonde by strenger resons / þat if thow hast power / to 'parforme a werk' of which thow shalt repente / thanne is it bettre þat thow suffre / than bigynne || [2411] wel seyn they / þat defenden euery wight' to assaye / a thyng' of which he is in doute / wheither he may parforme it' or no [2412] ¶ And after / whan ye haue examyned youre conseil / as I haue seyd. biforn / & knowen wel þat ye may parforme youre emprise / conferme it thanne sadly / til it be at an ende

[2413] ¶ Now it is resoũ and tyme / þat I shewe yow / whanne & wherfore / þat ye may chaunge youre conseillours / with oute youre reproue || [2414] Soothly / man may chaungen his purpos / and his conseil / if the cause cesseth / or whan a newe cas bitideth || [2415] for the lawe seith / þat vpon thynges / þat newely bitideth / bihoueth newe conseil [2416] ¶ And Seneca seith || If thy conseil is come / to the erys of thyn enemy / chaunge thy conseil [2417] ¶ Thow mayst also chaunge thy conseil / if so be þat thou fynde þat by errour / or by oother cause / harm / or damage / may bityde [2418] ¶ Also / if thy conseil be deshoneste / or ellis cometh of deshoneste cause / chaunge thy conseil || [2419] for the lawes seyn / that alle bihestes / þat ben deshoneste / ben of no value /

[2420] And eek if it so be / þat it be inpossible / or may nat goodly be performed / or kept' ||

[2421] And take this / for a general rule || That euery conseil / þat is affermed so strongly / þat it may nat be chaunged / for no condicion / þat may bityde / .I seye that thilke conseil is wikked

[2422] ¶ This Melibeus / whan he hadde herd / the doctrine of his wyf/ Dame Prudence / answerde in this wise [2423] ¶ Dame quod he / as yet in to this tyme / ye han wel & couenably taught me / as in general / how I shal gouerne me / in chesynge / & in the withholdyng' of my conseillours || [2424] But now wolde I fayn / þat ye wolde condescenden in especial / [2425] & telle me how liketh yow / or what semeth yow / by oure conseillours / þat we han chosen in oure present nede

[2426] My lord quod she / I biseke yow / in al humblesse / þat ye wol nat wilfully / replye ayein my resons / ne distempre youre herte / thogh I speke thyng' þat yow displese / [2427] for god woot' þat as in myn entente / I speke it for youre beste / for youre honour / & for youre profit eke / [2428] And soothly I hope / þat youre benygnytee / wol taken it in pacience [2429] ¶ Trusteth me wel quod she / þat youre conseil / as in this cas / ne sholde nat as to speke proprely / be called a conseilyng' but a mocion or a moeuyng of folie / [2430] in which conseil / ye han erred / in many a sondry wise

[2431] ¶ ffirst & forward / ye han erred / in the assemblyng' of youre conseillours / [2432] for ye sholde first han clepid a 'fewe folk/ to youre conseil / and after / ye myghte han shewed it' to mo folk' if it hadde be nede [2433] ¶ But certes / ye han sodeynly clepid to youre conseil / a gret multitude of peple / ful chargeant/ & ful anoyous for to heere [2434] ¶ Also ye han erred / for ther as ye sholde oonly / han clepid to youre conseil / youre trewe freendes / olde / & wise / [2435] ye han yclepid straunge folk'. yong folk' / false flatereres / & enemys

reconsiled / & folk/ þat doon yow reuerence withouten loue [2436] ¶ And eek also / ye han erred / for ye han broght with yow / to youre conseil./ Ire / Coueitise / & hastifnesse /. [2437] the whiche thre thynges / ben contrariouse / to euery conseil honeste / & profitable /. [2438] the whiche thre thynges / ye han nat anientissed / or destroyed hem / neither in youre self' ne in youre conseillours / as ye oghte / || [2439] ¶ Ye han erred also / for ye han shewed to youre conseillours / youre talent' & youre affeccioñ / to make werre anon / & for to do vengeance / [2440] they han espied by youre wordes / to what thyng' ye ben enclyned || [2441] And ther-fore / han they conseilled yow / rather / to youre talent' than to youre profit' [2442] ¶ Ye han erred also / for it semeth / þat yow suffiseth / to han ben conseilled / by thise. conseilours oonly / & with litel auys / [2443] wher as in so gret' & so heigh a nede / it hadde ben necessarie / mo conseilours / & moore deliberacion' / to performe youre emprise [2444] ¶ Ye han erred also / for ye ne han nat examyned youre conseil in the forseyde manere / ne in due manere / as the cas requyreth [2445] ¶ Ye han erred also / for ye han maked no diuision' bitwixe youre conseilours / this is to seyn / bytwixe youre trewe freendes / & youre feyned conseilours / [2446] ne ye ne haue nat knowe the wyl / of youre trewe freendes / olde / and wise / [2447] but ye han cast alle hir wordes / in an hochepot' & enclyned youre herte / to the moore part' & to the gretter nombre / & ther be ye condescended || [2448] And sith ye woot wel / þat men shal alwey fynde / a gretter nombre of foolis / than of wise men / [2449] and therfore / the conseils þat ben at congregacions / and multitudes of folk/ ther as men take moore reward / to the nombre / than to the sapience of persones / [2450] ye se wel / þat in swyche conseillynges / foolis han the maistrie [2451] ¶ Melibeus answerde agayn / and seyde / I graunte wel þat I haue erred / [2452] but ther as thow hast toold me her biforn / þat he ne is nat to blame / þat chaungeth his con-

seillours / in *cer*teyn cas / & for certeyne Iuste causes / [2453] I am al redy / to chaunge my conseilours / right as thow wolt deuyse || [2454] The *pro*uerbe seith / that for to do synne / is mannyssh / but *cer*tes / for to *perseuere* longe in synne [1] is werk of the deuel

[2455] ¶ To this sentence / answerde anon dame Prudence / & seyde || [2456] Examyneth quod she youre conseil / & lat vs se / the whiche of hem / han spoken moost resonably / & taught yow best conseil / [2457] And for as muche / as þat the examinacion is necessarie / lat vs bigynne / at the Sirurgiens / and at the Phisiciens / þat first speeken in this matere || [2458] I sey yow þat the Sirurgiens & Phisiciens / han seyd yow in youre conseil / discretly / as hem oghte / [2459] And in hir speche / seyden ful wysly / that to the office of hem / ap*er*teneth / to doon to euery wight' honour & *pro*fit'. and no wight' to anoye / [2460] and after hir craft' to doon gret diligence vn-to the cure of hem / whiche þat they han in hir gou*ern*ance [2461] ¶ And sire / right as they han answered wysly & discretly / [2462] right so rede .I. / þat they be heighly & sou*ere*ynly gerdoned / for hir noble speche / [2463] and eek for they shullen / do the moore ententif bisynesse / in the curacioñ of thy doghter deere || [2464] ffor al be it so / that they ben youre freendes / therfore shal ye nat suffren / þat they serue you for noght'. [2465] but ye oghte / the rather gerdone hem / & shewen hem youre largesse || [2466] And as touchynge the *pro*posicioñ / which þat the Physiciens / encresceden in this cas / this is to seyn / [2467] that in maladies / that a cont*ra*rie / is warisshed / by another contrarie [2468] I wolde fayn knowe / how ye vnderstande thilke text' & what' is youre sentence [2469] ¶ Certes quod Melibeus / I vnderstonde it' in this wise || [2470] that right' as they han doon me a cont*ra*rie / right so / sholde I / doon hem another / [2471] for right' as they han venged hem on me / & doon me wrong' right so / shal I venge me vp-on hem /

& doon hem wrong' [2472] & thanne haue I cured / a cont*r*arie by another

[2473] ¶ Lo / lo / quod dame Prudence / how lightly is euery man enclyned / to his owene desir / and to his owene plesance || [2474] Certes quod she / the wordes of the Phisiciens / ne sholde nat han ben vnderstonden / in that wise || [2475] for *cer*tes wikkednesse / is nat contrarie to wikkednesse / ne vengeance / to vengeance / ne wrong' to wrong' but they ben semblable || [2476] And therfore / .o. vengeance is nat warisshed / by another vengeance / ne .o. wrong' by another wrong' [2477] but euerich of hem encresceth / & aggreggeth oother [2478] ¶ But *cer*tes / the wordes of thise Phisiciens / sholde ben vnderstonde / in this wise || [2479] ffor good & wikkednesse / ben two cont*r*aries / and pees & werre / vengeance & suffrance / discord & acord / and many othere thynges || [2480] But *cer*tes / wikked / shal be warisshed by goodnesse / discord. by acord / werre. by pees / and so forth of othere thynges || [2481] And her to / acordeth Seynt' [1]Poul the Apostle / in many places / [2482] he seith / Ne yeldeth noght harm for harm / ne wikked speche / for wikked speche / [2483] but do wel / to hym *þat* dooth to thee harm / & blesse hym / *þat* seith to thee harm / [2484] And in manye othere places / he amonesteth pees & acord [2485] ¶ But now wol I speke to yow / of the conseil / which *þat* was yeuen to yow / by the men of lawe / & the wise folk' [2486] *þat* seyden alle by oon acord / as ye han herd bifore || [2487] That ou*er* alle thynges / ye shal do youre diligence to kepe youre p*er*sone / & to warnestore youre hous / [2488] & seyden also / *þat* in this cas ye oghten for to werke / ful auysely / & *with* greet' deliberacioñ [2489] ¶ And sire / as to the firste point' that toucheth / to the kepyng of youre p*er*sone / [2490] ye shul vnderstonde / that he *þat* hath werre / shal euere moore deuoutly & mekely / preyen / byforn alle thynges / [2491] *þat* Ih*es*us crist of his mercy / wol

han hym in his proteccion) / & ben his souereyn helpyng' at his nede [2492] ¶ for certes in this world / ther is no wight' þat may be conseilled ne kept suffisantly / with oute the kepyng' of oure lord Ihesu Crist' [2493] ¶ To this sentence / acordeth the prophete Dauid / that seith / [2494] If god ne kepe Citee / in ydel / waketh he þat it kepeth [2495] ¶ Now syre / thanne shul ye / committe the kepyng' of youre persone / to youre trewe freendes / þat been approued and yknowe / [2496] & of hem / shul ye axen help / youre persone for to kepe || ffor Catoñ seith / If thou hast nede of helpe / axe it of thy freendes / [2497] for ther nys noon so good a Phisicien / as thy trewe freend [2498] ¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow / fro alle straunge folk' & fro lyeres / & haue alwey / in suspect' hir compaignye [2499] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonce seith / Ne taak no compaignye / by the wey / of a straunge man / but if so be / þat thow haue knowe hym / of a lenger tyme / [2500] And if so be / þat he falle in-to thy compaignye / par-auenture / with-outen thyn assent'. [2501] enquere thanne / as subtilly as thow mayst' of his conuersacioñ / & of his lyf bifore / And feyne thy wey / Sey þat thow wolt go thider / as thow wolt nat go / [2502] And if he bereth a spere / hoold thee on the right syde / And if he bere a swerd / hoold thee on the left' syde [2503] ¶ And after this / thanne shal ye kepe yow wysly / from al swich manere peple / as I haue seyd bifore / & hem & hir conseil eschewe [2504] ¶ And after this / thanne shal ye kepe yow in swich manere / [2505] that for any presumpcion of youre strengthe / þat ye ne despise nat' ne attempte nat' the myght of youre Aduersarie / so lite / þat ye lete / the kepyng' of youre persone / for youre presumpcioñ / [2506] for euery wys man / dredeth his enemy [2507] And Salomon seyth ' ¶ Weleful is he / þat of alle hath drede || [2508] ffor certes he þat thurgh the hardynesse of his herte / & thurgh the hardynesse of hym self' hath to gret presumpcioñ / hym shal yuel bityde [2509] ¶ Thanne

shal ye euere mo countrewayte emboyssementz & al espiaille [2510] ¶ ffor Senek seith / þat the wise man þat dredeth harmes / escheweth harmes / [2511] ne he ne falleth in-to perils / þat perils escheweth / [2512] And al be so / þat it seme / þat thow art in siker place: yet shaltow alwey do thy diligence / in kepyng' of thy persone / [2513] this is to seyn / ne be nat necligent' to kepe thy persone / nat oonly fro thy grettest enemys / but fro thy leeste enemy [2514] ¶ Senek seith || A man þat is wel auysed / he dredeth his leste enemy || [2515] Ouyde seith || that the litel wesele / wol slee the grete Bole / & the wilde hert [2516] ¶ And the book seith / a litel thorn may prikke a kyng' ful soore / And an hound / wol holde the wilde boor || [2517] But nathelees / I sey nat/ thow shalt be so coward / þat thow doute / ther / wher as is no drede || [2518] The book' seith / that som folk haue gret lust' to deceyue / but yet they dreden hem / to be deceyued / [2519] yet shaltow drede / to been empoysoned / & kepe thee / from the compaignye of scorneres / [2520] ¶ ffor the book seith / with Scorneres / make no compaignye / but flee hire wordes / as venym

[2521] ¶ Now as to the seconde point' where as youre wise conseilours / conseiled yow / to warnestore youre hous *with* gret diligence:/ [2522] I wolde fayn knowe / how þat ye vnderstonde thilke wordes / & what is youre sentence

[2523] ¶ Melibeus answerde & seyde || Certes / I vnderstonde it' in this wise / that I shal warnestore myn hous / *with* toures / swiche as han Castelles / & othere manere edifices / & armure / & Artelries / [2524] by whiche thynges / I may my persone & myn hous / so kepen & defenden / þat myne enemys shul been in drede / myn hous for to approche

[2525] ¶ To thys sentence / answerde anon Prudence || Warnestoryng' quod she of heighe toures / & of grete edifices / [*appartiennent aucune foiz a orgeul* [2526] *Aprez len fait les tours et les edifices* (MS Reg. 19 C xi, lf 58, col. 2)]

with grete costages / & with gret *tra*uaille / and whan þat they been accompliced / yet be they nat worth a stree / but if they been defended / by trewe freendes / that been oolde / and wise [2527] ¶ And vnderstonde wel / þat the gretteste / and the strengeste garnysoñ / þat ryche man may haue / as wel / to kepen his *per*sone / as his goodes: is [2528] þat he be biloued with his subgetz and with his neighebores [2529] ¶ ffor thus seith Tullius / that ther is a manere garneson / þat no man may venquyse ne discomfite / and þat [1]is / [2530] a lord / to be biloued / of his Citezeins / and of his peple

[2531] ¶ Now sire / as to the .iij^e^ poynt^is^ wher as youre olde and wise conseilours / seiden / þat yow ne oghte nat sodeynly / ne hastily / proceden in this nede / [2532] but þat yow oghte *pur*ucien and apparailen yow in this cas / with greet diligence and greet deliberacioñ: [2533] trewely / I trowe þat they seyden right wisely / and right sooth [2534] ¶ ffor Tullius seith || In euery nede / er thow bigynne it^is^ apparayle thee / with greet diligence || [2535] thanne seye I / þat in vengeance takynge / in werre / in bataile / and in warnestorynge / [2536] er thow bigynne / I rede þat thow apparaile thee ther-to / and do it^is^ with greet deliberacioñ [2537] ¶ ffor Tullius seith / that long apparailynge biforn the bataile / maketh short victorie || [2538] And Cassidorus seith / the garneson is strenger / whan it is long tyme auysed

[2539] ¶ But now lat vs speke of the conseil þat was acorded by youre neighebores swiche as doon yow reu*e*rence / with-outen loue / [2540] youre olde enemys reconsiled / youre flaterers / [2541] þat conseileden yow *cer*teyne thynges pryuely / and openly conseileden yow the cont*ra*rie || [2542] The yonge folk^is^ also / þat conseileden yow / to venge yow / and make werre anoon: [2543] And *cer*tes sire / as I haue seyd biforn || ye han greetly erred / to han clepid swich maner folk / to youre conseil / [2544] whiche conseilours been ynow repreued bi the resons foreseyd / [2545] but nathelees / lat vs now descende to

the special ¶ Ye shuln first proceden after the doctryne of Tullius || [2546] Certes / the trouthe of this matere / or of this conseil / nedeth nat/ diligently enquere / [2547] for it is wel wist' whiche they been / that han doon to yow / this trespas and vileynye / [2548] and how manye trespasours / and in what manere / they han to yow doon al this wrong' and al this vileynye [2549] ¶ And after this / thanne shulle ye examyne the .ij^e condicioñ / which þat the same Tullius addeth in this matere / [2550] for Tullius put a thyng/ which þat he clepeth consentynge / this is to seyn / [2551] who been they and whiche been they / and how manye þat consenten to thy conseil in thy wilfulnesse / to do hastif vengeance / [2552] And lat vs considere also / who been they and how manye been they / and whiche been they / þat consenteden / to youre Aduersaries [2553] ¶ And certes / as to the firste poynt' it is wel knowen whiche folk' been they / þat consenteden / to youre hastif wilfulnesse / [2554] for trewely alle tho / þat conseileden yow to maken sodeyn werre / ne been nat youre freendes || [2555] Lat vs now considere whiche been they þat ye holde so greetly youre freendes / as to youre persone / [2556] for al be it so / þat ye be myghty and ryche: certes / ye ne been / but [1]allone / [2557] for certes / ye ne han no child but a doghter / [2558] ne ye ne han bretheren / ne cosyns germayns / ne noon oother ney kynrede / [2559] wherfore / þat youre enemys / for drede sholden stynte / to plede with yow / or destroye youre persone [2560] ¶ Ye knowe also / þat youre richesses / moten be despended in diuerse parties / [2561] and whan þat euery wight hath his part' they ne wollen take but litel reward / to venge thy deeth || [2562] but thyne enemys / been .iij^e and they han manye children / bretheren / cosyns / and oother ney kynrede / [2563] and thogh so were / thow haddest slayn of hem .ij^e or .iij^e yet dwellen ther ynowe / to wreken hir deeth / and to sle thy persone || [2564] and thogh so be / þat youre kynrede be moore syker and stedefast' than

the kyn of youre aduersarie? / [2565] yet nathelees / youre kynrede / nys but a fer kynrede / they been / but litel syb to yow / [2566] and the kyn of youre enemys / been ney syb to hem / and certes as in that' hir condicion / is bet than youres [2567] ¶ Thanne / lat vs considere also / if the conseilynge / of hem þat conseileden yow to taken sodeyn vengeance / wheither it acorde to reson? [2568] And certes / ye knowe wel nay? [2569] for as by right and reson / ther may no man take vengeance on no wight' but the Iuge þat hath the Iurisdiccioñ of it' [2570] whan it is ygraunted hym to take thilke vengeance hastily / or attemprely / as the lawe requereth [2571] ¶ And yet more ouer / of thilke word / that Tullius clepith / consentynge? [2572] thow shalt considere / if thy myght and thy power may consente and suffise / to thy wilfulnesse and to thy conseilours / [2573] And certes / thow mayst wel seyn / that nay / [2574] for sikerly as for to speke proprely / we may do no thyng' but oonly swich thyng' as we may do rightfully / [2575] and certes / rightfully ne mowe ye take no vengeance / as of youre propre auctoritee / [2576] thanne mowe ye seen / that youre power ne consenteth nat/ ne acordeth nat' with youre wilfulnesse [2577] ¶ Lat vs now examyne the .iij.e poynt' that Tullius clepith Consequent || [2578] Thow shalt vnderstande / that the vengeance þat thow purposest for to taken / is the consequent' [2579] and ther-of' folweth another vengeance / peril / and werre / and othere damages with-oute nombre / of whiche / we been nat waar / as at this tyme [2580] ¶ And as touchynge the .iiij.e poynt' that Tullius clepith engendrynge / [2581] thow shalt considere / that this wrong' which that is doon to thee / is engendred / of the hate of thyne enemys / [2582] and of the vengeance takynge vp-on that' wolde engendre another vengeance / and muchil sorwe / and wastynge of richesses / [1] as I seyde

[2583] ¶ Now sire / as touchynge to the poynt' that' Tullius clepith causes / which þat is the laste poynt'? [2584] thow

shalt vnderstonde / þat the wrong' þat thow hast receyued / hath certeyne causes / [2585] whiche þat clerkes clepen Oriens and Efficiens / and Causa longinqua / and causa propinqua / this is to seyn: the fer cause / and the ny cause / [2586] the fer cause / is almyghty god that is cause of alle thynges || [2587] the neer cause / is thy thre enemys / [2588] the cause accidental / was hate / [2589] the cause material / been the .v. woundes of thy doghter / [2590] the cause formal / is the manere of hir werkynge / that broghten laddres and clomben In at thy wyndowes / [2591] the cause final / was for to sle thy doghter / it lettyd nat / in as muche as was in hem was || [2592] but for to speke of the fer cause: as to what ende they shul come /: or what shal finally bityde of hem in this cas: ne kan I nat deme / but by coniectynge and by supposynge / [2593] for we shuln suppose / that they shul come to a wikked ende / [2594] by cause / þat the book of decrees seith ¶ Selden / or with greet peyne been causes ybrought to good ende / whan they been baddely bigonne

[2595] ¶ Now sire / if men wolden axe me / why þat god suffrede men to do yow this vileynye: certes I kan nat wel answere / as for no soothfastnesse || [2596] for the Apostle seith / that the sciences and the Iugementz of oure lord god almyghty / been ful depe / [2597] ther may no man comprehende ne serchen hem suffisantly [2598] ¶ Nathelees / by certeyne presumpcions and coniectynges / I holde & bileue / [2599] that god / which þat is ful of Iustice and of rightwisnesse / hath suffred this bityde / by Iuste cause resonable

[2600] ¶ Thy name is Melibe / this is to seyn / a man that drynketh hony / [2601] thow hast y-dronke so muchil hony / of swete temporel richesses and delices and honours of this world / [2602] that thow art dronken / and hast forgeten Ihesu crist' thy creatour / [2603] thow ne hast nat doon to hym / swich honour and reuerence as thee oghte: [2604] ne thow ne hast nat wel taken kepe / to

the wordes of Ouyde || that seith / [2605] vnder the hony of the goodes of thy body? is hyd the venym / that sleth the soule [2606] ¶ And Salomon seith || If thow hast founden hony / ete of it þat suffiseth / [2607] for if thow ete of it out of mesure? thow shalt spewe / and be nedy and poore / [2608] and perauenture / Crist hath thee in despit and hath torned awey fro thee his face / and his erys of misericorde / [2609] and also he hath suffred / þat thow [1]hast been punysshed in the manere þat thow hast ytrespased? [2610] ¶ Thow hast doon synne agayn oure lord Crist || [2611] for certes / the .iij.e enemys of mankynde / that is to seyn / the flessh / the feend / and the world / [2612] thow hast suffred hem / entre in to thyn herte wilfully / by the wyndowes of thy body / [2613] and hast nat defendid thy self / suffisantly agayns hir assautes & hir temptacions / so þat they han woundid thy soule. in .v. places || [2614] this is to seyn / the dedly synnes / þat been entred in to thyn herte by thy .v. wittes || [2615] And in the same manere / oure lord Crist hath wold & suffred / þat thy .iij.e enemys been entred in to thyn hous by the wyndowes / [2616] and han ywoundid thy doghter in the forseyde manere

[2617] ¶ Certes quod Melibe / I se wel / þat ye enforce yow muchil by wordes to ouercome me in swich a manere / þat I shal nat venge me of myne enemys / [2618] shewynge me the perils & the yueles / þat myghten falle of this vengeance || [2619] But who so wolde considere in alle vengeances / the perils and yueles þat myghten sewe of vengeance takynge? [2620] a man wolde neuere take vengeance / and that were harm / [2621] for by the vengeance takynge / been the wikked men disseuered / fro the goode men / [2622] and they þat han wil to do wikkednesse / restreyne hir wikked purpos / whan they seen the punysshynge & chastisynge of trespassours ||

[2623] [*A ce respond dame Prudence: certes, dist-elle, je vous octroie que de vengence vient moult de biens;*

[2624] *mais faire vengence n'appartient pas à un chascun, fors seulement aux juges et à ceulx qui ont la jurisdiction sur les malfaiteurs.* (Le Ménagier de Paris, i. 214, ed. 1846.)] [2625] And yet seye I moore / that right as a singuler persone synneth / in takynge vengeance of another man: [2626] right so synneth the Iuge / if he do no vengeance of hem that it han disserued || [2627] ffor Senek seith thus || That maister he seith is good / þat preueth shrewes || [2628] And as Cassidore seith || A man dredeth to do outrages / whan he woot & knoweth / þat it displeseth / to the Iuges and the souereyns || [2629] And another seith || The Iuge þat dredeth to do right maketh men shrewes || [2630] And Seint Poul thapostle seith in his epistle whan he writeth vn-to the Romayns / That the Iuges beren nat the spere / with-outen cause / [2631] but they beren it to punysshe the shrewes & mysdoers / & for to defende the goode men [2632] ¶ If ye wol thanne take vengeance of youre enemys: ye shul retourne / or haue youre recours to the Iuge þat hath the Iurisdiccioñ vp-on hem / [2633] & he shal punysshe hem / as the lawe axeth & requereth

[2634] ¶ A quod Melibe / this vengeance liketh me no thyng [2635] I bithenke me now & take hede / how fortune hath norisshed me / fro [1]my childhode / & hath holpen me / to passe many a strong paas: [2636] Now wol I assayen hire / trowynge with goddes helpe þat she shal helpe me / my shame for to venge /

[2637] ¶ Certes quod Prudence / if ye wol werke by my conseil: ye shul nat assayen fortune / by no wey / [2638] ne ye shul nat lene / or bowe vn-to hire / after the word of Senek || [2639] for thynges þat been folily doon / & þat been in hope of fortune: shullen neuere / come to good ende / [2640] And as the same Senek seith || The moore cleer & the moore shynynge þat fortune is /: the moore brotil & the sonner broke she is /. [2641] trusteth nat in hire / for she nys nat stedefast ne stable / [2642] for whan thow trowest to be moost seur or syker of hir

helpe / she wol faile thee & deceyue thee [2643] ¶ And where as ye seyn / that fortune hath norisshed yow frò youre childhode: [2644] I seye / þat in so muchil / shul ye the lasse truste in hire & in hir wit‧ || [2645] ffor Senek seith || What man þat is norisshed by fortuné: she maketh hym to greet a fool / [2646] ¶ Now thanne syn ye desire / & axe vengeance / & the vengeance / þat is dõon after the lawe / & bifore the Iuge / ne liketh yow nat / [2647] & the vengeance / þat is doon in hope of fortune / is perilous & vncerteyn: [2648] thanne haue ye noon oother remedie / but for to haue youre recours / vn-to the souereyn Iuge / þat vengeth / alle vileynyes & wronges / [2649] and he shal venge yow / after that hym self witnesseth / where as he seith || [2650] leueth the vengeance to me / and I shal do it‧

[2651] ¶ Melibe answerde || If I ne venge me nat‧ of the vileynye / þat men han doon to me: [2652] I. somne / or warne hem / þat han doon to me that vileynye / & alle othere / to do me another vileynye / [2653] for it is writen / If thow take no vengeance of an old vileynye: thou somnest thyne Aduersaries / to do thee a newe vileynye || [2654] And also / for my suffrance / men wolden do me so muchil vileynye / þat I myghte neither bere it‧ ne sustene / [2655] and so sholde I been put‧ & holden ouer lowe || [2656] ffor men seyn / I muchil suffrynge / shul manye thynges falle vn-to thee / whiche yow shalt nat mowe suffre

[2657] ¶ Certes quod Prudence / I graunte yow / þat ouer muchil suffrance / is nat good / [2658] but yet‧ ne folweth it nat ther of / þat euery persone / to whom men don vileynye / take of it vengeance / [2659] for that aperteneth & longeth al oonly to the Iuges / for they shul venge the vileynyes & iniuries / [2660] and therfore / tho two auctoritees / þat ye han seyd aboue / been oonly / vnderstonden in the Iuges: [2661] [1]for whan they suffren ouer muchil / the wronges & vileynyes to be doon

with-outen punysshynge: [2662] they somne nat a man al oonly / for to do newe wronges / but they comanden it [2663] ¶ Also / a wys man seith / That the Iuge / *þat* correcteth nat the Synnere: comandeth & biddeth hym do synne || [2664] And the Iuges & souereyns / myghten in hir land so muchil suffre of the shrewes & mysdoerys / [2665] *þat* they sholden by swich suffrance by *proces* of tyme / wexen of swich power & myght' *þat* they sholden putte out' the Iuges & the sou*er*eyns / from hir places / [2666] & at the laste / maken hem lese hir lordshipes

[2667] ¶ But lat vs now putte / *þat* ye haue leue to venge yow / [2668] I seye / ye be nat of myght & power / as now to venge yow / [2669] for if ye wol maken comparison / vn-to the myght of youre Adu*er*saries: ye shul fynde in manye thynges *þat* I haue shewid yow er this: *þat* hir condicioñ / is bettre than youres / [2670] and therfore seye I / *þat* it is good as now / *þat* ye suffre & be pacient'

[2671] ¶ fforther-moore / ye knowen wel / that after the *comune* sawe: it is a woodnesse / a man to stryue *with* a strenger / or a moore myghty man / than he is hym self / [2672] & for to stryue / *with* a man / of euene strengthe / that is to seyn / with as strong a man as he is: it is *per*il / [2673] and for to stryue *with* a wayker man / it is folye || [2674] and therfore / sholde a man fle stryuynge / as muchil as he myghte || [2675] ffor Salomon seith || It is a greet worshipe to a man / to kepen hym fro noyse & stryf || [2676] And if it so bifalle / or happe / *þat* a man of gretter myght' & strengthe / than thow art' do thee greuance: [2677] Studie & bisie thee rather / to stille the same greuance / than for to venge thee || [2678] ffor Senek seith / That he putteth hym in greet *per*il / *þat* stryueth *with* a gretter man / than he is hym self' || [2679] And Catoñ seith || If a man / of hyer estaat' or degree / or moore myghty than thow / do thee anoy / or greuance: suffre hym / [2680] for he *þat* ones hath greued thee /

may another tyme / releue thee & helpe? [2681] ¶ Yet sette I cas / ye haue bothe myght & licence for to venge yow? [2682] I seye / þat ther be ful manye thynges / þat shul restreyne yow / of vengeance takynge / [2683] & make yow / for to enclyne to suffre & for to han pacience / in the wronges / þat han been doon to yow [2684] ¶ ffirst & foreward / If ye wol considere the defautes / þat been in youre owene persone? [2685] for whiche defautes / god hath suffred yow haue this tribulacioñ / as I haue seyd yow / her biforn || [2686] ffor the Poete seith / That we oghten paciently taken / the tribulacions þat comen to vs / whan þat we thynken & consideren / þat we han disserued to haue hem || [2687] And [1] Seint Gregorie seith / That whan a man / considereth wel / the nombre of his defautes and of his synnes? [2688] the peynes & the tribulacioñs þat he suffreth / semen the lesse vn-to hym / [2689] And in as muche as hym thynketh / his synnes / moore heuy & greuous? [2690] in so muche / semeth his peyne the lighter and the esier vn? to hym [2691] ¶ Also / ye owen / to enclyne & bowe youre herte / to take the pacience / of oure lord Ihesu crist. as seith Seint Peter / in hise Epistles || [2692] Ihesu crist he seith / hath suffred for vs / & yeuen ensample to euery man / to folwe & sewe hym / [2693] for he dide neuere synne / ne neuere cam ther a vileynous word / out of his mouth / [2694] Whan men cursed hym / he cursed hem noght And whan men betten hym / he manaced hem noght [2695] ¶ Also / the grete pacience / which Seintes / þat been in Paradys / han had / in tribulacions þat they han y-suffred / with-outen hir desert or gilt [2696] oghte muchil stire yow to pacience [2697] ¶ fforther moore / ye sholde enforce yow to haue pacience / [2698] considerynge / þat the tribulacions of this world / but litel while endure / & soone passed been & goon / [2699] And the ioye þat a man seketh to haue by pacience in tribulacioñs? is perdurable / after that the

Apostle seith / in his Epistle / [2700] The ioye of god he seith / is perdurable / that is to seyn / euere lastynge [2701] ¶ Also / troweth & bileueth stedefastly / þat he nys noght wel ynorisshed ne wel ytaught' þat kan nat haue pacience / or wol nat receyue pacience || [2702] ffor Salomon seith || That the doctrine & the wit of a man / is knowen by pacience || [2703] And in another place he seith / That he þat is pacient' gouerneth hym by greet prudence || [2704] And the same Salomon seith || The angry & wrathful man / maketh noyses / And the pacient man / attempreth hem & stilleth || [2705] he seith also || It is moore worth to be pacient' than for to be right strong' [2706] And he þat may haue the lordshipe of his owene herte' is moore to preyse / than he þat by his force / or strengthe / taketh grete Citees || [2707] And ther-fore / seith Seint Iame in his Epistle / That pacience / is a greet vertu of perfeccioũ

[2708] ¶ Certes quod Melibe / I graunte yow / Dame Prudence / þat Pacience / is a greet vertu of perfeccioũ / [2709] but euery man / may nat haue the perfeccioũ / þat ye seken / [2710] ne I nam nat of the nombre / of right parfite men / [2711] for myn herte / may neuere be in pees / vn-to the tyme / it be vengid || [2712] And al be it so / þat it was greet peril to myne enemys / to do me a vileynye / in takynge vengeance vp-on me' [2713] [1]yet token they noon hede of the peril / but fulfilden / hir wikked wyl & hir corage || [2714] And therfore me thynketh / men oghten nat repreue me / thogh I putte me in a litel peril / for to venge me / [2715] & thogh I do a greet excesse / that is to seyn / þat I venge / oon outrage by another //

[2716] A. quod dame Prudence / ye seyn youre wil & as yow liketh || [2717] But in no caas of the world / a man sholde nat do outrage ne excesse / for to vengen hym || [2718] ffor Cassidore seith || That as yuele / dooth he þat vengeth hym by outrage / as he / þat dooth the

outrage || [2719] And ther-fore / ye shul venge yow / after the ordre of right || that is to seyn / by the lawe / and nat by excesse / ne by outrage || [2720] And also / if ye wol venge yow / of the outrage of youre Aduersaries in oother manere than right comandeth: ye synnen || [2721] And therfore seith Senek|| That a man shal neuere venge / shrewednesse / by shrewednesse / [2722] And if ye seye / þat right axeth a man / to defende violence by violence / and fightynge by fightynge: [2723] Certes / ye seye sooth / whan the defense / is doon anon / with-outen interualle / or with-outen taryynge / or delay / [2724] for to defenden hym / & nat for to vengen hym || [2725] And it bihoueth / þat a man putte swich attemperance in his defense / [2726] þat men / haue no cause / ne matere / to repreuen hym þat defendeth hym / of excesse & outrage || [*Car autrement ce seroit contre droit et contre Raison.* (Reg. 19 C 7)] [2727] Pardee ye knowe wel / þat ye maken no defense as now / for to defende yow / but for to venge yow / [2728] and so seweth it þat ye han no wyl / to do youre dede attemprely / [2729] and therfore / me thynketh / that pacience is good || ffor Salomon seith || That he / þat is nat pacient shal haue greet harm /

[2730] ¶ Certes quod Melibe / .I. graunte yow / þat whan a man / is inpacient & wrooth / of that þat toucheth hym nat and þat apertheneth nat vn-to hym / thogh it harme hym / it is no wonder || [2731] ffor the lawe seith / That he is coupable / þat entremetteth hym / or medleth / with swich thyng as apertenet nat vn-to hym [2732] ¶ And Salamon seith That he þat entremeteth of the noyse / or stryf / of another man: is lyk to hym / þat taketh an hound by the erys / [2733] for right as he / that taketh a straunge hound by the erys / is outher while / biten with the hound: [2734] right in the same wise is it resoñ / þat he haue harm þat by hys inpacience medleth hym / of the noyse / of another man / where / as it apertheneth nat vn-to hym || [2735] But ye knowe wel þat this dede / that

is to seyn / my grief and my desese [1]toucheth me right ny / [2736] And therfore / thogh I be wrooth / and inpacient' it is no meruaille / [2737] and sauynge youre grace / I kan nat se / þat it myghte greetly harme me / thogh I tooke vengeance / [2738] for I am richere & moore myghty / than myne enemys been / [2739] and wel knowen ye / þat by moneye & by hauynge grete possessions / been alle the thynges of this world gouerned || [2740] And Salomon seith || That alle thynges obeyen to moneye

[2741] ¶ Whanne Prudence / hadde herd hir housbonde auanten hym / of his richesse & of his moneye: dispreisynge / the power of his Aduersaries: she spak' & seyde in this wise || [2742] Certes deere sire / I graunte yow / þat ye been / riche & myghty / [2743] & þat the richesses been goode / to hem / þat han wel ygeten hem / & þat wel konne vsen hem || [2744] ffor right as the body of a man / may nat lyue with-oute the soule: namoore may it lyue / with-oute the temporel goodes / [2745] and by richesses / may a man gete hym grete [frendes] || [2746] ¶ And therfore / seith Pamphilles || If Anetherdes doghter / he seith / be riche: she may chese / of a thousand men / which she wol take to hir housbonde || [2747] for of a thousand men: oon wol nat forsaken hire / ne refusen hire || [2748] And this Pamphilles seith also || If thow be right happy / that is to seyn / If thow be right riche: thow shalt fynde / a greet nombre of felawes & freendes / [2749] and if thy fortune chaunge / that thow wexe poore: farwel freendshipe & felaweshipe / [2750] for thow shalt been / al allone / with-outen any compaignye / but if it be / the compaignye of poore folk' [2751] ¶ And yet' seith this Pamphilles moore ouer || That' they þat been / thralle & bonde of lynage / shuln be maad / worthy and noble by the richesses / [2752] and right so as by richesses / ther comen manye goodes: right so by pouerte / come ther manye harmes & yueles || [2753] for greet pouerte / con-

streyneth a man / to do manye yueles || [2754] And therfore clepeth Cassidore / pouerte / the moder of Ruyne / [2755] that is to seyn / the moder of ouerthrowynge / or fallynge down [2756] ¶ And therfore / seiþ Piers Alfonce || Oon of the gretteste Aduersitees of this world / is / [2757] whan a free man by kynde / or of burthe / is constreyned by pouerte / to eten / the almesse of his enemy || [2758] And the same seith Innocentꝰ in oon of his bookes || he seith / Thatꝰ sorweful & myshappy / is the condicioñ of a poore beggere / [2759] for if he axe nat his meteꝰ he dyeth for hungir / [2760] [1]And if he axe / he dyeth for shame / and algates necessitee constreyneþ hym to axe || [2761] And therfore seith Salomon || That bettre is to dye / than for to haue swich pouerte || [2762] And as the same Salomon seith / Bettre it is / to dye of bitter deeth / than for to lyuen in swich wise [2763] ¶ By thise resons / þat I haue seyd vn-to yow / and by manye othere resons / þat I koude seye / [2764] I graunte yow / þat richesses been goode / to hem þat geten hem wel / and to hem / þat wel vsen tho richesses || [2765] And ther-fore wol I shewe yow / how ye shul haue yow / and how ye shul bere yow in gaderynge of richesses / and in what manere ye shul vsen hem

[2766] ¶ ffirstꝰ ye shul geten hem / with-outen greet desir by good leiser sekyngly and nat ouer hastilyꝰ [2767] ffor a man þat is to desirynge to geten richesses / abandoneth hym first to thefte / & to alle othere yueles || [2768] And therfore seith Salomon || he þat hasteth hym to bisily to wexe riche / shal be noon Innocentꝰ || [2769] He seith also / that the richesse / þat hastily cometh to a manꝰ soone & lightly gooth and passeth from a man || [2770] But that richesse þat cometh litel & litel / wexeth alwey & multiplieth || [2771] And sire / ye shullen gete richesses by youre witꝰ & by youre trauaille vn-to youre profitꝰ / [2772] and that with-outen wrongꝰ or harm doynge / to any oother persone || [2773] ffor the lawe

seith || that ther maketh no man hym self riche: if he do harm / to another wight || [2774] this is to seyn / that nature defendeth & forbedeth by right þat no man make hym self riche / vn-to the harm of another *per*sone [2775] ¶ And Tullius seith / that no sorwe / ne no drede of deeth / ne no thyng þat may falle vn-to a man / [2776] is so muchel ageyns nature / as a man / to encresse his owene *profit* to the harm of another man: [2777] And thogh the grete men and the myghty men geten richesses. moore lightly than thow: [2778] yet shaltow nat be ydel ne slow / to do thy *profit* for thow shalt in alle wise / fle ydelnesse || [2779] ffor Salomon seith || that ydelnesse techeth a man to do manye yueles || [2780] And the same Salomon seith / that he þat *trau*ailleth & bisieþ hym / to tilien his lond: shal ete breed / [2781] but [he] þat is ydel and casteth hym to no bisynesse ne ocupacioñ / shal falle in-to pouerte and dye for hunger / [2782] And he þat is ydel & slow: kan neuere fynde couenable tyme / for to do his *profit* || [2783] ffor ther is a *ver*sifiour seith || that the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter / by cause of the grete coold / and in somer / by encheson of the hete || [2784] ffor thise causes seith Caton || waketh / and enclineth yow nat ouer mychel / for to slepe || for ouer mychel [1] reste / norissheth and causeth manye vices || [2785] And therfore / seith Seint Ierome ¶ Dooth so*mm*e goode dedes / þat the deuel / which is oure enemy / ne fynde yow nat vnocupied / [2786] for the deuel / ne takeþ nat lightly / vn-to his werkynge / swiche as he fyndeth ocupied in goode werkes

[2787] ¶ Thanne thus / In getynge richesses / ye mosten fle ydelnesse / [2788] and afterward ye shul vse the richesses whiche ye haue geten / by youre wit and by youre *trau*aille / [2789] in swich a manere / þat men holde yow nat to scars / ne to sparynge / ne to fool large / that is to seyn / ouer large a Spendere || [2790] ffor right as men blamen an Auarous man / by cause of his scarsitee & chyncherie: [2791] in the same wise is he to blame /

þat spendeth ouer largely / [2792] and therfore seith Catoun || Vse he seith thy richesses / þat thow hast ygeten / [2793] in swich a manere / þat men haue no matere ne cause / to calle thee / neither wrecche ne chynche / [2794] for it is greet shame to a man / to haue a poore herte and a riche purs || [2795] He seith also / the goodes þat thow hast ygeten / vse hem by mesure / that is to seyn / spende mesurably / [2796] for they / þat folily wasten and despenden / the goodes þat they han: [2797] whan they han namoore propre of hir owene: they shapen hem / to take the goodes of another man || [2798] I seye thanne / that ye shal fle Auarice / [2799] vsynge youre richesses in swich manere / þat men seye nat/ þat youre richesses been ybiryed / [2800] but þat ye haue hem in youre myght and in youre weldynge || [2801] ffor a wys man / repreueth the Auaricious màn & seith thus / in two vers || [2802] Wher-to and why / biryeth a man his goodes by his grete Auarice / and knoweth wel / þat nedes moste he dye: [2803] for deeth / is the ende of euery man / as in this present lyf / [2804] And for what cause / or encheson ioyneth he hym / or knytteth he hym / so faste vn-to his goodes / [2805] þat alle hise wittes / mowen nat disseueren hym / or departen hym fro hise goodes / [2806] and knoweth wel / or oghte knowe / þat whan he is deed / he shal no thyng bere with hym out of this world || [2807] And ther-fore / seith Seint Austyn || That the Auaricious man / is likned vn-to helle / [2808] þat the moore it swolweth / the moore desir it hath to swolwe & deuoure / [2809] And as wel / as ye wolde eschewe to be called an Auaricious man or chynche: [2810] as wel sholde ye kepe yow & gouerne yow in swich a wise / þat men calle yow nat fool large || [2811] Ther-fore seith Tullius || The goodes he seith of thyn hous / sholde nat been hidde ne kept so cloos: but þat they myghte been opned by pitee & debonairetee / [2812] that is to seyn: [1]to yeue hem part þat han greet nede / [2813]

ne thy goodes sholden nat be so open / to be euery mannes goodes [2814] ¶ Afterward / in getyng' of youre richesses / and in vsynge hem: ye shul alwey / haue thre thynges in youre herte || [2815] that is to seyn / oure lord god / Conscience / and good name [2816] ¶ ffirst ye shul haue god in youre herte / [2817] and for no richesse / ye shullen do no thyng' which may in any manere displese god / that is youre Creatour & makere || [2818] ffor after the word of Salomon / It is bettre to haue a litel good / with the loue of god /: [2819] than to haue mychel good & tresor / and lese the loue of his lord god || [2820] And the prophete seith: That bettre it is to been a good man / & haue a litel good / and tresor /: [2821] than to be holden a shrewe / & haue grete richesses || [2822] And yet seye I ferther moore / that ye sholden alwey doon youre bisynesse / to gete yow richesses / [2823] so þat ye gete hem / with good conscience || [2824] And thapostle seith / that ther nys thyng in this world / of which / we sholden haue so greet ioye / as whan oure conscience / bereth vs good witnesse || [2825] And the wise man seith || The substance of a man / is ful good / whan synne is nat in mannes conscience [2826] ¶ Afterward / in getynge of youre richesses / & in vsynge of hem: [2827] yow moste haue greet bisynesse & greet diligence / þat youre goode name / be alwey kept' & conserued || [2828] ffor Salomon seith || that bettre it is & moore it auaileth a man / to haue good name / than for to haue grete richesses / [2829] And therfore / he seith in another place || do greet' diligence seith Salomon in kepynge of thy freend / and of thy goode name / [2830] for it shal lenger abyde with thee / than any tresor / be it neuer so precious || [2831] And certes / he sholde nat' be called a gentil man / that after god & good conscience / alle thynges left' ne dooth his diligence & bisynesse / to kepen his goode name || [2832] And Cassidore seith / that it is signe of a gentil herte / whan a man / loueth & desireth / to haue a good name ||

[2833] And therfore seith seint Austyn || that ther been two thynges / þat arn necessarie & nedefulle / [2834] and that is good conscience / & good loos || [2835] that is to seyn / good conscience / to thyn owene persone inward / and good loos for thy neighebore outward || [2836] And he / þat trusteth hym so muchil in his goode conscience / [2837] þat he displeseth / and setteth at noght his goode name or loos / and rekketh noght thogh he kepe nat hys goode name: nys but a cruwel cherl

[2838] ¶ Sire / now haue I shewed yow / how ye shul do / in getynge richesses / & how [1]ye shullen vsen hem / [2839] And I se wel / þat for the trust þat ye han in youre richesses / ye wol moeue werre & bataille /· [2840] I conseile yow / þat ye bigynne no werre / in trust of youre richesses for they ne suffisen noght werres to mayntene / [2841] And therfore seith a Philosophre / That man þat desireth / and wole algates han werre: shal neuere haue suffisance / [2842] for the richer þat he is: the gretter despenses moste he make / if he wol haue worshipe & victorie || [2843] And Salomon seith / That the gretter richesses þat a man hath / the mo despendours he hath || [2844] And deere sire / al be it so / þat for youre richesses / ye mowe haue muchel folk: [2845] yet bihoueth it nat ne it is nat good / to bigynne werre / where as ye mowe / in oother manere haue pees vn-to youre worshipe & profit || [2846] for the victorie of batailles þat been in this world / lyth nat in greet nombre / or multitude of peple / ne in the vertu of man / [2847] but it lyth in the wyl / & in the hand / of oure lord god almyghty / [2848] and ther-fore Iudas Machabeus / which was goddes knyght [2849] whan he sholde fighte ageyn his Aduersarie / þat hadde a gretter nombre & a gretter multitude of folk / and strenger than was the peple / of this Machabe: [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaignye / and seyde / right in this wise || [2851] Als lightly quod he / may oure lord god almyghty / yeue victorie to fewe folk

as, to manye folk/ [2852] for the victorie of a bataile cometh nat' by the grete nombre of peple / [2853] but it come / fro oure lord god of heuene || [2854] And deere sire / for as muchel as ther is no man certeyn / if it be worthy / þat god yeue hym victorie / [*ne plus quil scet se il est dines de lamour de dieu* (MS Reg. 19 C vii, lf 142, bk)] or nagh't after that Salomon seith: [2855] therfore euery man / sholde greetly drede / werres to bigynne || [2856] And by cause þat in batailles / fallen manye perils / [2857] & happeth outher while / þat as soone is the grete man slayn / as the litel man / [2858] And as it is ywriten / in the seconde book of kynges || The dedes of batailles / been Auenturouse & no thyng certeyne / [2859] for as lightly / is oon hurt with a spere / as another [2860] ¶ And for ther is greet peril in werre: therfore sholde a man / fle & eschewe werre / in as muchel / as a man may goodly || [2861] ffor Salomon seith / he þat loueth peril / shal falle in peril

[2862] ¶ After þat dame Prudence / hadde spoken in this manere / Melibe answerde & seyde [2863] ¶ I se wel dame Prudence that by youre faire wordes & by youre resons / þat ye han shewed me: þat the werre / liketh yow no [1]thyng' [2864] but I haue nat yet herd youre conseil / how I shal do in this nede

[2865] ¶ Certes quod she / I conseile yow / þat ye acorde with youre Aduersaries / & þat ye / haue pees with hem || [2866] ffor Seint' Iame seith / in hise epistles / That by concord & pees / the smale richesses / wexen grete / [2867] & by debaat and discord / the grete richesses fallen doun / [2868] And ye knowen wel / þat oon of the gretteste & moost souereyn thyng' þat is in this world / is vnitee & pees / [2869] And therfore seyde oure lord Ihesu crist' to hise Apostles / in this wise || [2870] Wel happy & blessed been they / þat louen / & purchacen pees / for they been called children of god [2871] ¶ A quod Melibe now se I wel / þat ye louen nat myn honur ne my worshipe || [2872] Ye knowen wel / þat myne

Aduersaries han bigonnen this debaat and brige by hire outrage / [2873] & ye se wel / þat they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees / ne they asken nat to be reconsiled: [2874] wol ye thanne / þat I go meke me & obeye me to hem & crye hem mercy: [2875] for sothe / that were nat my worshipe || [2876] ffor right as men seyn / þat ouer greet homlynesse / engendreth despisynge: so fareth it by to greet humylitee / or mekenesse /

[2877] ¶ Thanne bigan dame Prudence / to maken semblant of wrathe & seyde || [2878] Certes sire / sauf youre grace / I loue youre honur & youre profit/ as I do myn owene / & euere haue doon / [2879] ne ye / ne noon oother / syen neuere the contrarie || [2880] And yet if I hadde seyd / þat ye sholde han purchaced the pees & the reconsiliacioun: I ne hadde nat muchel mystake me / ne seyd amys || [2881] ffor the wise man seith || The dissensioun / bigynneth by another man / & the reconsilyng bigynneth by thy self || [2882] And the prophete seiþ / fflee shrewednesse / & do goodnesse / [2883] seke pees & folwe it as muchel as in thee is || [2884] yet seye I nat þat ye shul rather pursue to youre Aduersaries for pees / than they shuln to yow: / [2885] for .I. knowe wel / þat ye been so hard herted / þat ye wol do / no thyng for me || [2886] And Salomon seith / That he þat hath ouer hard an herte / atte laste / he shal myshappe & mystyde

[2887] ¶ Whanne Melibe hadde herd dame Prudence / make semblant of wrathe / he seyde in this wise || [2888] Dame / I pray yow / þat ye be nat displesed / of thynges þat I seye / [2889] for ye knowe wel / þat I am angry & wrooth / & that is no wonder / [2890] and they þat been wrothe / witen nat wel what they doon / ne what they seyn || [2891] Therfore / the prophete seith / That troubled eyen / han no cleer sighte / [2892] but seieth & conseileth me / as yow liketh / for I am redy / to do / right as ye wol desire / [2893] & if ye repreue me of my folie: I am the moore holden [1] to loue yow / & to preise

yow || [2894] ffor Salomon seith || That he þat repreueth hym þat dooth folie: [2895] he shal fynde gretter grace / than he þat deceyueth hym by swete wordes

[2896] ¶ Thanne seyde dame Prudence / I make no semblant of wrathe ne of angir / but for youre grete profit || [2897] ffor Salomon seith || he is moore worth / þat repreueth / or chideth a fool / for his folie / shewynge hym semblant of wrathe: [2898] than he þat supporteth hym & preiseth hym / in his mysdoynge / & laugheth at his folie || [2899] And this same Salomon seith afterward || That by the sorweful visage of a man / that is to seyn / by the sory & heuy contenance of a man: [2900] the fool correcteþ & amendeth hym self

[2901] ¶ Thanne seyde Melibe / I shal nat konne answere / vn-to so manye resons / as ye putten to me & shewen / [2902] seieth shortly / youre wil & youre conseil / & I am al redy / to fulfille & perfourne it

[2903] ¶ Thanne / dame Prudence / discouered al hir wyl vn-to hym / & seyde || [2904] I conseile yow quod she / abouen alle thynges / þat ye make pees bitwene god & yow / [2905] & beth reconsiled vn-to hym & to his grace / [2906] for as I haue seyd yow heer biforn: god hath suffred yow / to haue this tribulacioñ & disese / for youre synnes / [2907] and if ye do / as I seye yow / god wol sende youre Aduersaries vn-to yow / [2908] & maken hem falle at youre feet redy to do youre wyl & youre comandementz || [2909] ffor Salomon seith / whan the condicion of man / is plesant & likynge to god: [2910] he changeth the hertes of the mannes Aduersaries / & constreyneth hem / to biseken hym of pees & of grace / [2911] and I pray yow / lat me speken with youre Aduersaries / in pryuee place / [2912] for they shal nat knowe / þat it be of youre wyl / or youre assent. [2913] and thanne / whan I knowe hir wyl & hir entente: I may conseille yow / the moore seurly

[2914] ¶ Dame quod Melibe / dooth youre wyl / &

youre likynge / [2915] for I putte me hoolly / in youre disposicion & ordinance

[2916] ¶ Thanne dame Prudence / whan she say the goode wyl of hir housbonde: she delyueride / & took auys in hir self / [2917] thynkynge / how she myghte brynge this nede / vn-to a good conclusioñ & to a good ende: [2918] And whan she saugh hir tyme / she sente for thise Aduersaries to come vn-to hire / in to a priuee place / [2919] & shewed wysly vn-to hem / the grete goodes / þat comen of pees / [2920] & the grete harmes & perils / þat been in werre / [2921] & seyde to hem / in a goodly manere: / how þat hem oghten haue greet repentance / [2922] of the Iniurie & wrong' þat they hadden doon / to Melibe hir lord / & vn-to hire / & to hir doghter //

[2923] And whan they herden / the goodliche wordes / of dame Prudence: [2924] they weren so supprised & rauysshed / & hadden so 'greet ioye of hire / þat wonder was to telle || [2925] A lady quod they / ye han shewid vn-to us / the blessynge of swetnesse / after the sawe of Dauid the prophete || [2926] ffor the reconsilynge / which we ne been nat worthy to haue in no manere / [2927] but we oghten requeren it' with greet contricioñ & humylitee: [2928] ye of youre grete goodnesse / haue presented vn-to vs || [2929] Now se we wel / þat the science / & the konnynge of Salomon / is ful trewe / [2930] for he seith / That swete wordes / multiplien & encressen freendes / & maken shrewes / to be debonaire & meke

[2931] Certes quod they / we putten oure dede & al oure matere / & cause / al hoolly / in youre goode wyl / [2932] & been redy to obeye vn-to the speche & comandement' of my lord Melibe || [2933] And therfore deere & benygne lady / we preyen yow / & biseken yow / as mekely / as we konne & mowen / [2934] þat it like / vn-to youre grete goodnesse / to ful-fille in dede / youre goodliche wordes / [2935] for we consideren & knowelichen /

þat we han offendid & greued / my lord Melibe / out of mesure / [2936] so ferforth / þat we been nat of power / to maken his amendes || [2937] & ther-fore / we oblige & bynde vs & oure freendes / for to do al his wyl & his comandementz || [2938] but peraventure / he hath swich heuynesse & swich wrathe to vsward / by cause of oure offense / [2939] þat he wole enioyne vs / swich peyne / as we mowe nat bere / ne sustene || [2940] And ther-fore noble lady / we biseken to youre wommanly pitee / [2941] to taken swich auisement in this nede / þat we ne oure freendes / be nat desherited & destroyed / thurgh oure folie

[2942] ¶ Certes quod Prudence / it is an hard thyng & right perilous / [2943] þat a man putte hym al outrely in the arbitracioñ & Iuggement/ and in the myght & power of hise enemys || [2944] ffor Salomon seith: leeueth me / & yeueth credence / to that þat I shal seyn ¶ I seye quod he / ye peple / & gouernours / & gouernours of holy chirche / [2945] to thy sone / to thy wyf / to thy freend / ne to thy brother / [2946] ne yeue thow neuere myght ne maistrie of thy body / whil yow lyuest || [2947] Now / sithen he defendeth / þat man sholde nat yeue to his brother / ne to his freend / the myght of his body: [2948] by a strenger reson / he defendeth & forbedeth a man / to yeue hym self to his enemy / [2949] And nathelees I conseille yow / þat ye mystruste nat my lord / [2950] for I woot wel & knowe verraily / þat he is debonaire & meke / large / curteys / [2951] & no thyng desirous / ne coueitous / of good / ne richesse / [2952] for ther nys no thyng in this world þat he desireth / saue oonly / worshipe & honour [2953] ¶ fforther moore I knowe wel & am right seur / þat he shal no thyng do in this nede / with-outen my conseil / [2954] and I shal so werken in this [1]cause / þat by the grace of oure lord god / ye shul be reconsiled vn-to vs

[2955] ¶ Thanne seyden they with o voys || Worshipful

lady / we pu̧tten vs & oure goodes al fully / in youre wyl & disposicioñ / [2956] & been redy to come / what day þat it like vn-to youre noblesse / to lymyte vs / or assigne vs / [2957] for to maken / oure obligacion & boond / as strong as it liketh vn-to youre goodnesse / [2958] þat we mowe fulfille / the wyl of yow / & of my lord Melibe

[2959] ¶ Whanne Dame Prudence / hadde herd the answeres of thise men: she bad hem go agayn priuely / [2960] & she retourned / to hir lord Melibe / & tolde hym / how she fand hise Aduersaries ful repentant [2961] knowelichynge ful lowely / hir synnes & trespas / & how they weren redy / to suffren al peyne / [2962] requerynge & prayynge hym / of mercy & pitee

[2963] ¶ Thanne seyde Melibe || he is wel worthy / to haue pardoñ & foryifnesse of his synne / þat excuseth nat his synne / [2964] but knowelicheth & repenteth hym / axinge Indulgence || [2965] ffor Senek seith || There is the remissioñ & foryifnesse / where as the confessioñ is / [2966] for confessioñ / is neighebore to Innocence || [2967] And he seith / in another place [*a blank in the MS.* . .] that hath shame of his synne & knowelicheth it || And ther-fore / I assente & conferme me to haue pees: [2968] but it is good / þat we do it nat *with*-outen thassent & wil of oure freendes

[2969] ¶ Thanne was Prudence / right glad & ioyeful / & seyde || [2970] Certes sire quod she / ye han wel & goodly answerd / [2971] for right as by the conseil / assent / & help / of youre frendes / ye hãn ben stired / to venge yow / & make werre: [2972] right so / *with*-outen hire conseil / shul ye nat acorde yow / ne haue pees with youre Aduersaries || [2973] ffor the lawe seith || Ther nys no thyng so good / by wey of kynde / as a thyng to been vnbounde / by hym þat it was ybounde ||

[2974] And thanne Dame Prudence / *with*-outen delay / or taryynge / sente anon messages / for hir kyn / & for hire olde freendes / whiche þat were trewe & wise / [2975]

and tolde hem by ordre / in the *pr*esence of Melibe / al this matere / as it is aboue exp*r*essed & declared / [2976] & preyde hem / *þat* they wolde yeuen hire auys & conseil / what best were to do / in this nede || [2977] And whan Melibees freendes / hadde taken hire auys & deliberacioñ of the forseyde matere / [2978] & hadden examyned it by greet bisynesse & greet diligence: [2979] they yaue ful conseil / for to haue pees & reste / [2980] & *þat* Melibe / sholde receyue *with* good herte / hise Adu*er*saries / to foryifnesse & m*er*cy ||

[2981] And whanne Dame Prudence / hadde herd the assent of hir [1]lord Melibe / & the conseil of his freendes / [2982] acorde *with* hire wyl and hire entencioñ: [2983] she was wonderly glad in herte / & seyde || [2984] Ther is an old *prouerbe* quod she / seith || that the goodnesse *þat* thow maist do this day / do it [2985] & abide nat ne delaye it nat til tomorwe / [2986] And therfore I conseille / *þat* ye sende youre messages / swiche as been discrete & wise [2987] vn-to youre Adu*er*saries / tellynge he*m* on youre bihalue / [2988] *þat* if they wol trete of pees & of acord / [2989] *þat* they shape hem / *with*-outen delay or taryynge / to come vn-to vs / [2990] which thyng p*ar*fou*r*ned was in dede / [2991] and whanne thise trespassours & repentynge folk of hir folies / that is to seyn / the Adu*er*saries of Melibe / [2992] hadden herd / what thise messagers seyden vn-to hem: [2993] they weren right glad & ioyeful / & answereden ful mekely & benygnely / [2994] yeldynge g*r*aces & thankynges / to hire lord Melibe & to al his compaignye / [2995] & shopen hem *with*-oute delay to go *with* the messagers / & obeye to the comandement of hire lord Melibe /

[2996] And right anon they tooken hire wey / to the court of Melibe / [2997] & tooke *with* hem so*m*me of hir trewe freendes / to make feith for hem / & for to been hire borwes || [2998] And whan they were come / to

the presence of Melibe: he seyde hem thise wordes [2999] ¶ It standeth thus quod Melibe & sooth it is / þat ye [3000] causelees & with-outen skile & resoñ / [3001] han doon grete Iniuries & wronges to me / & to my wyf Prudence / & to my doghter also / [3002] for ye han entred in-to myn hous by violence / [3003] & haue doon swich outrage / þat alle men knowen wel / þat ye han deserued the deeth || [3004] And therfore wol I knowe & wite of yow / [3005] wheither ye wol putte the punysshynge & chastisynge / & the vengeance of this outrage / in the wil of me / & of my wyf or ye wol nat

[3006] ¶ Thanne the wiseste of hem thre / answerde for hem alle / & seyde || [3007] Sire quod he / we knowen wel / þat we been vnworthy / to comen vn-to the court of so greet a lord & so worthy / as ye been / [3008] for we han so gretly mystaken vs / & han offendid & gilt in swich a wise / ageyn youre hey lordshipe / [3009] þat trewely / we han deserued the deeth / [3010] but yet for the grete goodnesse & debonairetee / þat al the world / witnesseth of youre persone / [3011] we submitten vs / to the excellence & benygnytee of youre gracious lordshipe / [3012] & ben redy tobeye / to alle youre comandementz / [3013] biseekynge yow / þat of youre merciable pitee / ye wol considere oure grete repentance & lowe submissioñ / [3014] & graunten vs foryeuenesse / of oure outrageous trespas & offense / [3015] for wel we knowen / þat youre liberal grace & mercy / strecchen ferther / in-to goodnesse / than doon oure outrageouse giltes & trespas in-to wikkednesse / [3016] al be it þat cursedly & dampnablely / we han agilt ageyn youre hey lordshipe

[3017] ¶ Thanne Melibe / took hem vp fro the ground ful benygnely / [3018] & receyued hir obligacioñs & hir bondes by hir othes / vp-on hir plegges & borwes / [3019] & assigned hem a certeyn day / to retourne vn-to his court [3020] for to accepte & receyue / the sentence &

Iugement' þat Melibe wolde comande / to be doon on hem / by the causes aforeseyd || [3021] whiche thynges ordeyned ſ eu*er*y man retou*r*ned to his hous ||

[3022] And whanne þat dame Prudence saugh hir tyme / she ſ[r]eyned / & axed hir lord Melibe / [3023] what vengeance he thoghte to taken of hise Aduersaries ſ

[3024] ¶ To which / Melibe answerde & seyde || Certes quod he .I. thynke & purpose me fully / [3025] to disherite hem / of al þat eu*er*e they han / and for to putte hem in exil / for eu*er*e

[3026] ¶ Certes quod Dame Prudence / this were a cruel sentence / & muchel ageyn reson / [3027] for ye been riche ynow & han nó nede of oother mennes good / [3028] & ye myghten lightly in this wise / geten yow a coueitous name / [3029] which is a vicious thyng' & oghte been eschewid of euery man / [3030] for after the sawe of the word of thapostle || Coueitise / is roote of alle harmes / [3031] And therfore / it were bettre for yow / to lese so mychel good of youre owene / than for to take of hir*e* good / in this man*er*e / [3032] for bettre it is / to lese good *with* worshipe / than it is / to wynne good *with* vileynye & shame / [3033] And eu*er*y man / oghte do his diligence & his bisynesse / to geten hym a good name / [3034] and yet' shal he nat oonly bisien hym in kepynge his goode name ſ [3035] but he shal also / enforcen hym alwey / to do som thyng' by which he may renouelle his goode name || [3036] ffór it is writen / That the olde goode loos / or good name of a man / is soone goon & passed / whanne it is nat newed / nc renoueled || [3037] & as touchynge þat ye seyn / ye wol exile youre Adu*er*saries ſ [3038] that thynketh me / muchel agayn resoñ / & out of mesure / [3039] considered the power / þat they han yeuen yow vp-on hem self || [3040] And it is writen / that he is worthy to lesen his p*ri*uilege / þat mysvseth / the mygh[t] & the power þat is yeuen hi*m* / [3041] And I sette cas / ye myghte enioyne hem that peyne / by right & by lawe / [3042] which I

trowe ye mowe nat do / [3043] I seye / ye myghte nat putte it to execucioñ *per* auenture / [3044] & thanne were it likly / to retorne to the werre / as it was biforn / [3045] And ther-fore / if ye wole / *þat* men do yow obeisance / yow [1]moste deme moore curteisly / [3046] this is to seyn / ye moste yeue / moore esy sentences & Iugementz || [3047] ffor it is writen / that he / *þat* moost curteisly *com*mandeth / to hy*m* / men moste obeyen / [3048] & therfore .I. pray yow / *þat* in this necessitee / & in this nede / ye caste yow to ou*er*come youre herte || [3049] ffor Senek seith || that he *þat* ou*er*come*þ* his herte / ou*er*come*þ* twies || [3050] And Tulli*us* seith || ther is no thyng so com*men*dable in a greet lord / [3051] as whan he is debonaire & meke / & apeiseth hym lightly || [3052] And I pray yow / *þat* ye wol forbere now to do vengeance [3053] in swich a manere / *þat* youre good name / may be kept & conse*r*ued / [3054] & *þat* men mowe / haue cause & matere / to preise yow / of pitee & of *mer*cy / [3055] & *þat* ye haue no cause / to repente yow of thyng*e* *þat* ye doon || [3056] ffor Senek seith || He ou*er*cometh / in an yuel manere *þat* repenteth hym / of his victorie || [3057] Wherfore / I prey yow / lat *mer*cy be in youre herte / [3058] to theffect & entente / *þat* god almyghty haue *mer*ci on yow in his laste Iugement || [3059] ffor Seint Iame seith / in his epistle || Iugement *with*oute *mer*cy / shal be doon to hym / *þat* hath no *mer*cy / of another wight

[3060] ¶ Whanne Melibe hadde herd / the grete skiles & resons of dame Prudence / & hir wise Informacioñs & techynges / [3061] his herte gan enclyne to the wyl of his wyf/ considerynge hir trewe entente / [3062] conformed hym anon & assented fully / to werken after hir conseil / [3063] & thonked god / of whom *pro*cedeth al ver*tu* / & al goodnesse / *þat* hym sente a wyf of so greet discrec*ion* || [3064] And whanne the day cam / *þat* hise Adu*er*saries / sholde appieren / in his *pre*sence / [3065] he spak

to hem ful goodly / & seyde in this wise || [3066] Al be it so / þat of youre pride & by presumpcioñ & folie / & of youre necligence & vnkonnynge / [3067] ye haue mysborn yow / & trespased vn-to me: [3068] yet for as muchel / as I se & biholde youre grete humylitee / [3069] & þat ye been sory & repentant of youre giltes: [3070] it constreyneth me / to do yow grace & mercy / [3071] Wherfore I receyue yow to my grace / [3072] & foryeue yow outrely alle the offenses / Iniuries & wronges / þat ye haue doon / ageyns me & myne / [3073] to this effect & to this ende / þat god / of his endelees mercy / [3074] wole atte tyme of oure dyynge / foryeuen vs oure giltes þat we han trespassed to hym / in this wrecched world / [3075] for doutelees / if we be sory & repentant of the synnes & giltes / whiche we han trespased / in the sighte of oure lord god: [3076] he is so free & so merciable [3077] þat he wole foryeuen vs oure giltes / [3078] & bryngen vs to the blisse / that neuere hath ende.

¶ Here is endid / Chaucers tale / of Melibe ☙

GROUP I. FRAGMENT X.

§ 1. THE BLANK-PARSON LINK.

[This is really a link between some unwritten Tale and the Parson's. It has been made into the Manciple-Parson Link (or Yeoman-Parson by the Christ-Church MS) by Chaucer's copiers, though not meant for it.]

HENGWRT MS.

¶ The Prologe / of the Persons tale / ☙ [leaf 235]

[1—1 *over an erasure*]

BY that the 1Mañciple1 hadde his tale al ended
The Sonne / fro the Southlf lyne is descended
So lowe / that he nas nat to my sighte
Degrees .29. as of highte
Ten of the Clokke / it was / so as I gesse
ffor .xj. foot and litel moore / or lesse
My shadwe was / at thilke tyme as there
Of swich feet/ as my lengthe parted weere
In .6. feet equal / of proporcioñ
Ther with / the Mones exaltacioñ
I mene Libra / alwey gan ascende
As we were entryng at a Thropes ende
ffor which oure hoost as he was wont to gye
As in this cas / oure Ioly compaignye
Seyde in this wise / lordynges euerichon
Now lakketh vs / no tales / mo than oon
ffulfild is my Sentence / and my decree
I trowe / þat we han herd of ech degree
Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce
I pray to god / so yeue hym right good chaunce
That telleth this tale / to vs lustily
Sire preest quod he / artow a Vicary
Or arte a person / sey sooth by thy fey
Be what thow be / ne breke thow nat oure pley

ffor euery man saue thow / hath toold his tale
Vnbokele / and shewe vs / what is in thy Male
ffor trewely / me thynketh by thy cheere
Thow sholdest / knette vp wel a greet matere
Telle vs a fable anon / for Cokkes bones
¶ This person / answerde al atones
Thow getest fable noon / ytoold for me
ffor Poul / that writeth vn to Thymothe
Repreueth hem / þat weyuen Soothfastnesse
And tellen fables / and swich wrecchednesse
Why sholde I sowen draf / out of my fest
Whan I may sowen whete / if þat me lest
ffor which I seye / þat if yow list to heere [leaf 235, back]
Moralitee / and vertuous matere
And thanne / þat ye wol yeue me Audience
I wole ful fayn / at Cristes reuerence
Do yow plesance / leueful / as I kan
But trusteth wel / I am a Southren man
I kan nat geste / rom / ram / ruf / by lettre
Ne god woot / rym holde I but litel bettre
And ther fore if yow lest / I wol nat glose
I wol yow telle / a myrie tale in prose
To knytte vp al this feste / and make an ende
And Ihesu for his grace / wit me sende
To shewe yow the wey / in this viage
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrymage
That highte Ierusalem celestial
And if ye vouche sauf / anon I shal
Bigynne vp on my tale / for which I preye
Telle youre auys / I kan no bettre seye
But nathelees / this meditacioñ
I putte it ay / vnder correccioñ
Of clerkes / for I am nat textuel
I take but the sentence / trusteth wel
Ther fore / I make protestacioñ
That I wol stonde / to correccioñ

¶ Vp on this word / we han assented soone
ffor as it semed / it was for to doone
To enden / in som vertuous sentence
And for to yeue hym / space and audience
And bede oure hoost he sholde to hym seye
That alle we / to telle his tale hym preye
¶ Oure hoost hadde the wordes for vs alle
Sire preest quod he / now faire yow bifalle
Sey what yow list and we wol gladly heere
And with that word / he seyde in this manere
Telleth quod he / youre meditacioñ
But hasteth yow / the sonne wole adoun
Beth fructuous / and that in litel space
And to do wel / god sende yow his grace

¶ Explicit prohemium

THE PARSON'S TALE.

A TREATISE ON PENITENCE, IN 3 PARTS:

Part I. On **Penitence**, and its 1st requisite **Contrition (A)** (p. 593—612).

Part II. On its 2nd requisite, **Confession (B)** (p. 612—679).

Part III. On its 3rd requisite, **Satisfaction (C)** (p. 679—684), with the Writer's Leave-taking and Retractations (p. 684-85).

PART I. (p. 593—612).

ON PENITENCE, AND ITS 1ST REQUISITE, CONTRITION.

Procm on Jeremiah vi. 16. The Tale is to be on *Penitence* as a full noble way to lead folk to Christ, and is to treat of

i. 'what is Penitence' (p. 594).

ii. 'whennes it is cleped Penitence'. [*not in the Tale.*]

iii. 'in how manye maneres been the accioȝns or werkynges of Penitence' (p. 594-5).

iv. 'how many speces ther been of Penitence' (p. 595).

v. 'whiche thynges apertenen and bihouen to Penitence' (p. 595—682: nearly all Parts I and III, and all Part II).

vi. 'whiche thynges destourben Penitence' (at end of Part III, p. 682) (p. 593).

i. **Penitence** defined, by *a.* St Ambrose; *b.* 'som doctour'; *c.* the writer. Its requisites: 1. bewailing of sins; 2. purpose to have shrift, to do satisfaction, never to sin again, to continue in good works (p. 594).

[ii. *not given.*]

iii. The 3 actions of Penitence: 1. Baptism after sin; 2. not to do deadly sin after baptism; 3. not thus to do venial sin (p. 594-95).

iv. The 3 speces or kinds of Penitence: 1. Solemn (to be put out of church, or do open penance); 2. Common (to go naked on pilgrimage); 3. Private (p. 595).

v. The 3 necessities or requisites for Penitence (p. 596—682):

A. Contrition of heart (p. 596—612).

B. Confession of mouth (Part II, p. 612—679).

C. Satisfaction (Part III, p. 679—682).

Penitence avails against 3 things, by which we wrath Christ (p. 595).

A. Contrition is the root of Penitence, whose stem bears branches and leaves of Confession, and fruit of Satisfaction.

Contrition also bears a seed of grace, whose heat draws men to God. (Simile of the child and his nurse's milk.)

Penance is the tree of life (p. 596).

Four Points to be known about Contrition:

1. What it is; 2. the causes that move a man to it; 3. how to be contrite; 4. what it avails the soul (p. 597).

2. The 6 Causes that should move a man to Contrition:

a. Remembrance of Sins (p. 597-8).

b. Whoso does sin is the Thrall of Sin (p. 598-99).

c. Dread of the Day of Doom and the Pains of Hell (p. 599—604). These described: the Doom (p. 599-600); Job's 'lond of mysese and of derknesse' (p. 600-1); the 3 shames in hell against (1) 'Honours, (2) delices, and (3) richesses' (p. 611); poverty in 4 things: no treasure, food, clothing, or friends (p. 602); and no delights of the 5 senses. The pain shall be eternal (p. 603). Hell is orderless (p. 603-4). The 7 causes why the damnd have lost all hope (p. 604).

d. Remembrance of the good works we've left undone, and the loss of the good works done while we were in sin (p. 604-6). Deadly sin wipes out all good works formerly done (p. 605); and no good works can be done in deadly sin (p. 605-6). The new French song, *J'ai tout perdu mon temps* (also quoted in Chaucer's late poem of *Fortune*).

CONTENTS OF PARSON'S TALE. PART II.

e. Remembrance of Christ's suffering for our sins (p. 606). In man's sin, every ordinance is turnd up-so-down (p. 607). For this disorder Christ sufferd (p. 608).

f. The hope of 3 things: 1. Forgiveness of Sins, 2. the Gift of Grace to do well, 3. the Glory of Heaven (p. 609).

3. How to be contrite. Contrition must be universal and total: for sins of thought, for desires against God's law, for wicked words as well as wicked deeds (p. 610). Contrition must be angwishous and continual (p. 609-11).

4. How Contrition helps the soul. It sometimes delivers a man from sin; destroys the prison of hell; cleanses the soul; changes the son of Wrath to the son of Grace (p. 611-12).

PART II (*no.* V. *continued*).

B. CONFESSION (THE 2ND REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE) (p. 612—679).

B. Confession. § 1. (l. 317) 'what is confession' (p. 612).

§ 2. 'whether it oghte nedes be doon or noon' (p. 672-9).

§ 3. 'whiche thynges been couenable to verray Confession' (p. 674-79).

CONFESSION, § 1.

1. 'Confession is verray shewynge of synnes to the preest' (l. 318) (p. 612). We must understand too

a. (l. 321) 'whennes that synnes spryngen' (p. 612—15).

b. 'how they encreessen' (p. 615-16; 672-74).

c. 'whiche they been' (p. 616—672).

1.*a.* Sin sprang from the fall of Adam (p. 612). The legend of Adam and Eve told (p. 613). From Adam we took Original Sin, and were born sons of eternal damnation; but Baptism rescues us; though we keep liability to temptation, or Concupiscence (p. 613-14).

Concupiscence, or the nourishing and occasion of sin. St Paul and St Jerome's temptations (p. 614-15).

1.*b.* How Sin grows in a man. 1. by Concupiscence; 2. Subjection to the Devil; 3. Hesitation; 4. Doing, the Sin becoming Actual (p. 615-16).

1.*c.* Sin is *a.* venial, *β.* deadly (or mortal).

a. 1. Venial Sin defined. It skips into Deadly Sin. (Simile of the drops of water into a vessel's hold drowning the ship;) (p. 616).

β. 1. Deadly Sin defined (p. 617).

a. 2. Of divers small venial sins, hardly thought sins (p. 617-18); eating, drinking, talking, too much; using your wife too much; not visiting the sick (p. 617); talking vanities at church, &c. (p. 618). Cure of venial sins by love to Christ, prayer, confession, good works, receiving the Sacrament, holy-water, &c. (p. 618).

1.*c.* *β.* 2. *The Seven Deadly Sins.* The Chieftains, head and spring, of all other Sins (p. 619).

i. Pride (p. 619-26), and its Remedy (p. 626-8).

ii. Envy (p. 628-30), and its Remedy (p. 630-1).

iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its Remedy (p. 642-5).

iv. Accidie or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), and its Remedy (p. 650-1).

v. Avarice or Covetousness (p. 651-7), and its Remedy (p. 657-8).

vi. Gluttony (p. 658-9), and its Remedy (p. 660).

vii. Lechery (p. 660-8), and its Remedy (p. 668-72).

i. PRIDE (p. 619—626). Its 16 (and more) Twigs. 1. Disobedience, 2. Boasting, 3. Hypocrisy, 4. Despite, 5. Arrogance (p. 619), 6. Impudence, 7. Swelling of Heart (rejoicing in harm done), 8. Insolence, 9. Elation, 10. Impatience, 11. Contumacy, 12.

(FOR HENGWRT 558 *a*)

CONTENTS OF PARSON'S TALE. PART II.

Presumption, 13. Irreverence, 14. Pertinacity, 15. Vain-glory, 16. Jangling (chattering).

A private kind of pride (the Host's Wife's and Wife of Bath's[1]), wanting to go to offering first, &c. (p. 620).

Two kinds of Pride, *a.* 'within man's heart', *b.* without; *b.* being the sign of *a.*, 'as the gaye leefsel atte Taverne is sign of the wyn that is in the Celer'[2] (p. 620-21), *b.* outside pride.

a. in dear clothing, 1. superfluity of it: its cost, furring, chisel-holes, dragging in the dung, waste of material (p. 621), unfitness for giving to the poor: 2. scantness of it: showing men's privy members, and buttocks (like a she-ape's rump), and the former as half-flayd, in parti-colourd hose[3]. The 'outrageous array of Women' (p. 623).

β. in horses (p. 623), and vicious grooms to tend 'em; plate-harness, &c.

γ. in household: keeping too many retainers or servants, who oppress the poor (p. 624).

δ. in table: not asking the poor to feasts; having burning and ornamented dishes[4]; too costly cups, &c., and too choice minstrelsy (p. 624).

What Pride sins are deadly, and what venial (p. 624).

The Sources of Pride (p. 624): goods of Nature, Fortune, Grace (p. 624). The Folly of Pride in any of these goods of Nature: 'we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and . . of o nature'[5]. The general signs of *Gentleness.* (The flies calld 'bees', and their stingless king) (p. 625); 3 gifts of Grace; 3 of Fortune. The brittleness of popular praise[6] (p. 626).

The Remedy against Pride.

Humility or Meekness, and its 3 kinds: in 1. heart, 2. mouth, 3. works. 4 kinds of each of these (p. 626-27).

ii. Envy (p. 627-30): defined by the Philosopher and St Augustine. It springs from Malice (p. 627).

Malice; 2 kinds of: 1. hardness of heart, or recklessness; 2. opposing truth (p. 627).

The 2 kinds of Envy (p. 628): 1. sorrow at other men's prosperity; 2. joy at other men's harm: whence comes

Backbiting; 5 kinds (p. 628): 1. praise with a *but* at the end; 2. turning well-meant things upside down to ill ones; 3. lessening a neighbour's goodness; 4. putting one man above another; 5. glad listening to scandal (p. 628).

Grudging or murmuring (p. 628): 1. against God (p. 629); 2. Murmuring from avarice, 3. from pride, 4. from envy; 5. among Servants, who say 'the Devil's *Paternoster*'; 6. Murmuring from ire or hate: thence, *a.* Bitterness of Heart, *b.* Discord, *c.* Scorning; *d.* Accusing (p. 629); *e.* Malignity (p. 630).

The Remedy against Envy (p. 630-31).

Love of God and one's neighbour. How a man shall love his neighbour. How an enemy is included in the name 'neighbour' (p. 630). 3 Remedies of Love, against 3 deeds of Hate (p. 631). Love is the medicine that casts out the venom of Envy from man's heart (p. 631).

iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its 2 kinds: *a.* good Ire or Wrath (p. 632); *b.* wicked Ire, and its 2 kinds: sudden ire, and ire of malice aforethought (p. 632-33).

Three Shrews that forge in the Devil's furnace: Pride, Envy, and Contumely (p. 633).

[1] Melibe-Monk Link, B. § 11; and General Prologue, A.

[2] Chaucer's father no doubt had a sign outside his wine-shop or tavern in Thames Street, London.

[3] The outspoken and somewhat coarse abuse of the new fashions in dress is a great change from Chaucer's admirable Third-Period chaff of the moral short-comings of the monks and friars, &c., in the Prologue and middle Tales. If this is not change of man, it's change of mood.

[4] Chaucer must have seen plenty of these when he was page, valet, and squire.

[5] Compare Chaucer's *Gentleness*, &c. [6] Compare Clerk's Tale, Part VI, st. 135.

Wrath takes away a man's wit and spiritual life (p. 634).
Fruits of Wrath: 1. Hate. 2. War and wrong. 3. Manslaughter, *a. spiritual; b. bodily* (p. 634).
a. The 3 kinds of spiritual Manslaughter (3, calld 6 in MSS. p. 634): 1. by Hate. 2. by Backbiting. 3. Giving wicked Counsel, by Fraud (p. 634).
b. bodily Manslaughter: slaying with your tongue, giving orders or counsel to slay a man (p. 634).
Manslaughter in deed: its 4 (that is, 7) kinds (p. 635): 1. by law: a Justice condemning a man to death; 2. justifiable homicide, in defence of one's own life; 3. by misadventure: shooting an arrow, &c.; 4. a woman overlying her child; 5. a man making a woman barren by drinks, &c., killing the fœtus within her, shedding his seed in the wrong place; a woman killing the child in her womb; 6. a woman killing her child (after birth) for shame; 7. a man by lechery or blows killing a fœtus.
(Sixteen) other sins coming from Ire or Anger.
1. blaming or despising God, as hazarders do (Cp. *Pardoner's Tale*) (p. 635); and those who treat of the Sacrament of the altar irreverently (p. 636).
2. Attry anger: making angry false excuses for sin.
3. Swearing, which dismembers Christ (p. 636).
a. Of lawful Swearing, before a Judge: its 3 conditions, and its motives; *b.* God's name and Christ's, not to be taken in vain (p. 637); *c.* swearing for gentility or manliness (p. 638); *d.* swearing suddenly; *e.* of Adjuration and Conjuration by enchanters and necromancers; *f.* of Divination by Dreams, &c.; *g.* of Charms for Wounds and Maladies (p. 638).
4. Lying (p. 638), and its 6 kinds.
5. Flattering. How Flatterers are the Devil's Nurses, his Enchanters and Chaplains (p. 639).
6. Cursing that comes of irous heart: Malison.
7. Chiding and Reproach (p. 640); (specially a chiding wife[1]) (p. 640-41).
8. Scorning (p. 641).
9. Giving wicked Counsel (p. 641).
10. Sowing and making Discord (p. 642).
11. Double tongue (p. 642).
12. Betraying of Counsel (p. 642).
13. Menace.
14. Idle words.
15. Jangling (chattering) (p. 642).
16. Japing (joking) (p. 642-43).
The Remedy against Anger (p. 643-5). Debonairtee and Patience (p. 643). Four kinds of grievances, and their remedies: 1. wicked words, 2. loss of goods, 3. harm of body, 4. outrageous labour (p. 644).
Incentives to Patience. Story of the Philosopher and Child (p. 644-45). Obedience comes from Patience (p. 645).
iv. Accidie, or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), is an enemy to the 3 states of man,—1. innocence (p. 645), 2. prayer (p. 646), 3. grace;—and to one's livelihood. Its 12 bad consequences (p. 646): 1. Sloth (and its remedy); 2. Dread to begin good works (p. 646); 3. Wanhope, or Despair (and its Remedy) (p. 647); 4. Somnolence (p. 648), and 5. Negligence, or 6. Recklessness, and the Remedy for each; 7. Idleness; 8. *Tarditas*, or tarrying before turning to God (p. 649); 9. Lachesse, or giving up a good work begun; 10. Coldness; 11. Undevotion; 12. Worldly sorrow (p. 649).
The Remedy against Accidie (p. 650-51): Fortitude or Strength, and its 5 kinds. 1. Magnanimity[2] or great Courage; 2. Faith or Hope; 3. Assurance; 4. Magnificence; 5. Constancy (p. 651).

[1] Does Chaucer here refer to his former wife?
[2] Miswritten 'Magnificence' in Ellesmere and Lansdowne MSS.

v. AVARICE (p. 651-57). The difference between Avarice and Covetousness (p. 651); and between an Idolater and an avaricious man (p. 652). Of Covetousness, and lords' extortion from their bondmen: "humble folk been Cristes freendes" (p. 652-53). The Duty of lords to their thralls or churls. Of those that pillage Holy Church (p. 653-54); lords who plunder the poor are like wolves (p. 654). Of Deceit between Merchant and Merchant (p. 654). Of honest bodily Merchandise (the surplus of one country may be sent to help another) (p. 654). Of spiritual Merchandise, or Simony, and its 2 kinds (p. 655),—thieves that steal Christ's souls get livings (p. 655-56);—Hasardry or Games of Chance (p. 656). Other outcomes of Avarice (p. 656): 1. Lying, 2. Theft (bodily and spiritual) (p. 656-57), 3. False Witness, 4. False Oaths (p. 657).

The Remedy against Avarice (p. 657): Mercy and Pity, and reasonable Liberality (p. 658). Of foolish largess (p. 658).

vi. GLUTTONY (p. 658-59), and its 5 kinds (p. 659): 1. Drunkenness, or the burial of man's reason; 2. a troubled spirit; 3. bad way of eating; 4. distemperd bodily humours; 5. forgetfulness. Or, as St Gregory says, 1. eating too soon; 2. eating too delicate food; 3. taking too much; 4. troubling too much about cooking food; 5. eating greedily: these are the 5 fingers of the devil's hand (p. 659).

The Remedy against Gluttony (p. 660): Abstinence, and its fellows. Temperance, Shame, Content with plain food, Moderation, Soberness, Sparing (p. 660).

vii. LECHERY (p. 660). Its punishment in the Old Testament (p. 660). Adultery, and the desire of it (p. 661-62).

The 5 fingers of the Devil's other hand (p. 662); 1. foolish looking; 2. villainous touching; 3. foul words; 4. kissing (old dotards, and dry dogs at a rose-tree (p. 662); and how a man should love his wife); 5. the stinking deed of lechery (p. 663). Its kinds: 1. Fornication. Taking a maid's maidenhead, or 100th fruit (p. 663). 2. Adultery, defined. 3. Harms following from it: *a.* breaking of faith; *b.* theft (of the wife's body from her husband (Joseph and Potiphar's wife), and of her soul from Christ); *c.* breaking God's commandment, and defouling Christ (p. 664). Of Harlots and Bawds (p. 665). Adultery is set between Theft and Manslaughter. More kinds of Adultery: 1. by Men bound by Religious Vows, &c.; 2. those in Holy Orders (p. 665). Lecherous Priests are like a free Bull in a town, and they eat raw flesh of folk's wives and daughters (p. 666);-3. by man and wife copulating for pleasure only (p. 667); 4. copulation with kinsfolk, spiritual (or godchildren) or fleshly (blood relations). 5. the abominable unmentionable sin; 6. Pollution, of 3 kinds: 1. too rank humours; 2. weakness (p. 667); 3. evil thoughts (p. 668).

The Remedy for Lechery (p. 668): I. Chastity and Continence.

1. in Marriage. (The true effect of Marriage. One husband to have one wife (p. 668). How a man should behave to his wife (p. 669). How the wife should be subject to her husband (p. 669), and be moderate in behaviour, discreet in words, &c. (p. 669-70). The 3 causes for which man and wife may copulate (p. 670): *a.* begetting of children; *b.* to pay the mutual debt of their bodies; *c.* to avoid lechery (p. 670). The 4th cause, pleasure, is deadly sin (p. 670-71).)

2. In Widowhood; 3. Virginity (p. 671).

II. Special avoidance of causes of lechery: *a.* eating and drinking; long sleeping; *b.* the person who'd tempt you (p. 671-72). (I wish I could tell you the Ten Commandments; but it's too high doctrine (p. 672).) [End of *Confession*, § 1, *c.*]

Sin is in heart, mouth, deed, by the 5 Wits (p. 672).

§ 1.*b.* (see p. 615-16.) The 7 Circumstances that encrease or aggravate sins (p. 672). 1. the person who sins (male or female, &c.); 2. the kind of sin (fornication or homicide); 3. the place it was committed in (as in a church, by a priest) (p. 673); 4. for what motive; 5. the number of times it was committed; 6. by what temptation; 7. how it was committed; and all other circumstances (p. 674).

CONFESSION, § 2, § 3 (p. 674-79).

Profitable Confession, and its 4 (= 3) *Conditions* (p. 674):
1. sorrowful bitterness of heart (p. 674); its 5 signs: *a.* shamefastness (like the Publican's) (p. 675); *b.* humility; *c.* fulness of tears (p. 675); *d.* no hesitation (like the Magdalen) for shame; *e.* obedience to receive penance laid on you (p. 675).
2. speedy Confession (p. 676); its 4 Conditions: *f.* that it be well thought over; *g.* the greatness and number of sins must be understood; *h.* the sinner must be contrite, and *i.* avoid occasions of sins.
3. Shrift must be made to one man, not more (p. 676).

True Shrift, and its 10 *Conditions* (p. 677): 1. that it be of free will; 2. that it be lawful (both sinner and priest, Popish); 3. that it be not despairing of Christ's mercy; 4. that a man accuse himself only, and not another; 5. that it be not lying (accusing oneself of sins never committed) (p. 678); that it be by one's own mouth, and not by letter; 7. that the sin be not painted with fair words; 8. that the shrift be to a discreet priest; 9. that the shrift be not made for vain-glory, but for fear of Christ; 10. that the shrift be not made suddenly, for a joke (p. 678). You may be shriven more than once for the same sin; and should be houseld once a year (p. 679).

PART III (*no.* v. *continued, and no.* vi.).

SATISFACTION (THE 3RD REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE) (p. 679—684).

In *a.* Alms. *β.* bodily punishment.

a. Alms and its three kinds (p. 679): 1. Contrition of heart. 2. Pity for one's neighbour's faults. 3. Giving good counsel to other's souls and bodies (food, visits in prison, burial). These Alms should be done privily, if possible (p. 680).

β. Bodily Punishment (*Penance*), *of* 4 *kinds:* 1. Prayers (chiefly of the Paternoster, whose expounding I leave to Masters of Theology) (p. 680). 2. Watching, and its 3 kinds: forbearing, *a.* meat and drink, *b.* worldly jollity, and *c.* deadly sin (p. 681). 3. Fasting, and its 4 kinds: Liberality to poor folk; spiritual gladness of heart; not grudging at fasting; reasonable eating. 4. Virtuous teachings, or Discipline: *a.* by word, writing, or example; *b.* by wearing hairshirts, &c, next your skin, scourging yourself, taking evils and injuries patiently (p. 682). [End of no. v. in Part i; p. 593.]

vi. The 4 Things that disturb Penance [no. vi, or last §, of p. 593 at foot] (p. 682). 1. Dread, and its remedy. 2. Shame, and its remedy. 3. Hope: *a.* of long life, and *b.* consequent over-confidence in Christ's mercy (p. 683). 4. Wanhope, or Despair of Mercy; its 3 kinds: *x.* from great and long continued sin; *y.* from falls-back into sin; *z.* from not being able to persevere in goodness (p. 683).

The fruit of Penance (p. 683-4).

EPILOGUE.

The Author's Leave-taking, and Lament over, and Withdrawal of, his Sinful Books, &c. (p. 684-85).

[*Hengwrt MS, leaf* 236.]

[*There are no paragraph-breaks in the MS, but Tyrwhitt's are kept in the print for convenience sake. The sidenotes are all in a later hand.*]

¶ Here bigynneth / the Persons tale ☙

Ier*emie*. 6°. || State sup*er* vias / & videte & inter*r*ogate de semitis antiquis / que sit via bona / & ambulate in ea / & inuenietis refrigeriu*m* *anim*ab*us* ves*tr*is, &c

[75] Ovre swete lord / god of heuene / that no man wole p*er*isse / but wole þat we comen alle to the knoweliche of hym / and to the blisful lyf / þat is p*er*durable / [76] amonesteth vs / by the prophete Ieromie / that seith in this wise [77] Stondeth vp on the weyes / and seeth / and axeth of olde pathes / that is to seyn / of olde sentences / which is the goode wey / [78] and walketh in that wey / and ye shal fynde refresshynge for youre soules &c [79] ¶ Manye been / the weyes espirituels / that leden folk / to oure lord Iħu crist and to the regne of glorie / [80] of whiche weyes / ther is a ful noble wey and a ful couenable / which may nat faile / to man ne to womman / þat thurgh synne hath mysgoon / fro the righte wey of Ierusalem celestial / [81] and this wey / is clepid Penitence / of which / men sholde gladly herknen and enquere *with* al his herte / [82] to wite / what is penitence / and whennes / it is clepid penitence / and in how manye maneres / been the accions / or werkynges of penitence / [83] and how manye spices / ther ben of penitences / and whiche thynges / ap*er*tenen & bihouen to penitence / whiche thynges / destourben penitence.

[84] ¶ Seint Ambrose seith || that penitence / is the pleynynge of man / for the gilt' þat he hath doon / and namoore to doon any thyng' for which hym oghte to pleyne [85] ¶ And som doctour seith || Penitence / is þe waymentynge of man / þat sorweth for his synne / and pyneth hym self / for he hath mysdoon || [86] Penitence / with certeyne circumstances / is verray repentance of a man / þat halt hym self in sorwe / & oother peyne for hise giltes / [87] and for he shal be verray penitent' he shal first biwailen / the synnes / þat he hath doon / and stedefastly purposen in his herte / to haue shrift' of mouthe / and to doon satisfaccion / [88] and neuere to doon thyng' for which hym oghte moore to biwaile / or to compleyne / and to continue in goode werkes / or ellis / his repentance may nat auayle [89] [1] ffor as seith Seint Isydre || He is a Iapere / and a gabbere / and no verray repentant' þat eft soone dooth thyng' for which hym oghte repente || [90] Wepynge / and nat for to stynte to do synne / may nat auaile || [91] But nathelees men shal hope / þat at euery tyme þat man falleth / be it neuer so ofte / þat he may arise þurgh penitence / if he haue grace / but certeynly / it is greet dowte / [92] for as seith Seint Gregorie || Vnnethe (vix) ariseth he out of his synne / that is charged / with the charge of yuel vsage / [93] and ther fore / repentant folk / þat stynte for to synne / & forlete synne / er þat synne forlete hem / holy chirche / halt hem siker of hire sauacion / [94] and he þat synneth / & verraily repenteth hym in his laste / holy chirche / yet hopeth his sauacion by the grete mercy of oure lord Ihu crist' for his repentance / but taak the siker (tene) wey (certum) /

[95] And now / sith þat I haue declared yow / what thyng is penitence / now shul ye vnderstonde / þat ther been .iij. accioun of penitence / [96] ¶ The firste is / þat if a man be baptised / after þat he hath synned || [97] Seint Augustyn seith / but he be penitent / for his olde synful lyf / he may nat bigynne / the newe

[iij. A]cciouns of penitence:

 [1 leaf 230, back]

clene lyf / [98] for certes / if he be baptised with oute penitence of his olde gilt / he receyueth the mark of baptesme / but nat the *grace* / ne the remissiõ of hise synnes / til he haue repentance verray [99] ¶ Another defaute is this / that men doon deedly synne / after þat they han receyued baptesme / [100] ¶ The thridde defaute is ‖ that men fallen in venyal Synnes after hire baptesme / fro day to day ‖ [101] ther of seith seint Augustyn ‖ That penitence / of goode and of humble folk. is the penitence of euery day.

[iij. Spꝛeces of penaunce:

[102] ¶ The speces (species) of penãñce / been .iij. ‖ that oon of hem / is solempne ‖ Another is *com*mune ‖ and the thridde is priuee [103] ¶ Thilke penãñce þat is solempne / is in two maneres / as to be put oũt of holy chirche in lente / for slaughtre of children / and swich manere thyng [104] ¶ Another is / whan man hath synned openly / of which synne / the fame is openly spoken in the contree / and thanne holy chirche / by Iuge-ment destreyneth hym / for to doon open penañce ‖ [105] *Com*mune penãñce is / that preestes enioynen men *com*munly / in *cer*teyn cas / as for to goon *per*auenture naked in pilgrymage / or barefoot [106] ¶ Pryuee penãñce / is thilke þat men doon al day for *priu*ee synnes / of whiche / we shryue vs pryuely and receyue pryuee penance

[What] bihoueth to penitence

[107] ¶ Now shaltow vnderstande / what bihoueth and is necessarie to verray *per*fit penitence / and this stant / on .iij. thynges ‖ [108] Contricioñ of herte ‖ Confessioñ of Mouth / and Satisfaccioñ ‖ [109] for which / seith seint Ioñn Crisostom*us* [1] ¶ Penitence destreyneth man / to accepte benygnely eu*er*y peyne / þat hym is enioyned / with contricioñ of herte / & shrift of Mowthe / *with* satisfaccioñ / and in wirkynge of alle manere humylitee / [110] And this is fruytful penitence agayn .iij. thynges / in whiche we wrathe oure lord Iñu crist ‖ [111] this is to seyn / by delit in thynkynge / by recchelesnesse in spekynge / by wikked synful wirkynge / [112] And agayns thise /

wikkede giltes is penitence / that may be likned vn to a tree /

[113] ¶ The roote of this tree is contricioñ / þat hideth hym in the herte of hym / þat is verray repentant' right as the roote of a tree hideth hym in the erthe || [114] Of the roote of Contricioñ spryngeth a stalke þat bereth branches / and leues of confessioñ / and fruyt of satisfaccioñ || [115] for which / crist seith in his gospel || Dooth digne fruyt of penitence / for by this fruyt' may men knowe this tree / and nat by the rootē / that is hyd / in the herte of man / ne by the branches / ne the leues of Confessioñ || [116] And therfore / oure lord Iħu crist' seith thus || by the fruyt of hem / shul ye knowe hem || [117] Of this roote eek' spryngeth a seed of *grace* / the which Seed / is moder of Sikernesse / and this Seed / is egre and hoot' || [118] the *grace* of thys Seed / spryngeth of god thurgh remembrance on the day of dome / & on the peynes of helle || [119] Of this matere / seith Salomon || that in the drede of god / man forleteth his synne || [120] the hete of thys seed / is the loue of god / & the desirynge of the Ioyē *per*durable / [121] this hete / draweth the herte of man to god & dooth hym hate his synne / [122] for soothly / ther is no thyng' þat sauoureth so wel to a child / as the mylk of his norice / ne no thyng is to hym moore abhomynable / than thilke mylk / whan it is medled with oother mete || [123] right so the synful man / þat loueth his synne / hym semeth / it is to hym moost swete of any thyng || [124] but fro þat tyme / þat he loueth sadly oure lord Iħu crist / & desireth the lyf *per*durable / ther nys to hym / no thyng moore abhomynable / [125] for soothly / the lawe of god / is the loue of god || for which / Dauid the *pro*phete seith ¶ I haue loued thy lawe & hated wikkednesse & hate / he þat loueth god / kepeth his lawe & his word : [126] this tree saugh the *pro*phete daniel in spirit' vp on the auysion of Nabugodonosor / whanne he conseiled hym / to do penitence : [127] Penance / is the tree of lyf / to hem þat it receyuen / & he þat holdeth hym

in verray penitence / is blessed / after the sentence of Salomon

[128] ¶ In this penitence or Contricioñ / man shal vnderstonde iiij. thynges / that is to seyn / what is Contricioñ / and whiche ben the causes / *þat* moeuen a man to Contricioñ / and how he [1]sholde be contrit/ and what Contricioñ auaileth to the soule || [129] thanne it is thus /. that Contricioñ is the verray sorwe / *þat* a man receyueth in his herte for hise synnes / *with* sad purpos to shryue hym & to do penance & neuere moore to do synne / [130] and this sorwe / shal ben in this manere / as seith Seint Bernard || It shal ben heuy and greuous & ful sharpe & poynañt in herte || [131] first/ for man hath agilt his lord & his Creatour / and moore sharp & poynañt for he hath agilt his fader celestial / [132] and yet moore sharpe & poynañt/ for he hath wrathed & agilt hym *þat* boughte hym / *þat with* his precious blood / hath delyuered vs fro the bondes of synne / & fro the creweltee of the deuel / & fro the peynes of helle

[vj. Clauses to meue a [ma]n to contricioun]

[133] ¶ The causes / *þat* oghten moeuen a man to Contricioñ / been vj / ffirst/ a man shal remembren hym of hise synnes / [134] but looke *þat* thilke remembrance ne be to hym no delit by no wey / but gret shame & sorwe for his gilt || for Iob seith / Synful men / doon werkes worthy of Confessioñ / [135] And therfore / seith Ezechie || I. wol remembre me alle the yeris of my lyf / in bitternesse of myn herte || [136] And god seith in the Apocalipes / Remembre yow / fro whennes *þat* ye ben falle / for biforn that tyme *þat* ye synned / ye were the children of god / and lymes of the regne of god / [137] but for youre synne / ye ben woxe / thral & foul and membres of the feend / hate of Aungeles / Sclaundre of holy chirche / & foode of the false serpent perpetuel matere / of the fyr of helle / [138] And yet moore foul and abhomynable for ye trespasen so ofte tyme / as dooth the hound / *þat* retorneth to ete his spewyng[2] [139] & yet

. I. ||

[2 Vomite (*at side; later*)]

be ye fouler / for youre longe contynuynge in synne and youre synful vsage / for which / ye been roten in youre synne as a beest in his donge / [140] Swiche manere of thoughtes / maken a man haue shame of. his synne & no delit as god seyth by the prophete Ezechiel / [141] ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes / and they shullen displese yow soothly / Synnes been the weyes þat leden folk to helle

[142] ¶ The seconde cause / þat oghte make a man .2. to han desdeyn of synne / is this / that as seith Seint Peter || who so þat dooth synne / is thral of synne / & synne put a man in greet thraldam / [143] And therfore / seith the prophete Ezechiel / I wente sorweful / in desdayn of my self: ¶ Certes wel oghte a man / haue desdayn of synne & with drawe hym fro that thraldom & vileynye || [144] And lo / what seith Seneca in this matere / he seith thus / though I wiste þat god / neither god ne man / ne sholde neuere knowe it / yet [1] wolde I. haue desdayn / for to do synne [145] ¶ And the same Seneca also seith || .I. am born to gretter thynges / than to be thral to my body / or than for to maken / of my body a thral / [146] ne a fouler thral may no man ne womman make of his body / than for to yeue his body to synne / [147] al were it the fouleste cherl / or the fouleste womman þat lyueth and leest of value / yet is he thanne moore foul & moore in seruitute / [148] euere fro the hyer degree þat man falleth / the moore is he thral and moore to god & to the world vil & abhomynable [149] ¶ O goode god / wel oghte man haue greet desdayn of synne / sith þat thurgh synne / ther he was fre / now is he maked bonde / [150] And ther fore / seith Seint Augustyn ¶ If thow hast desdayn of thy seruant if he agilte or synne: haue thow thanne desdayn / þat thow thy self sholdest do synne / [151] take reward of thy value / þat thow ne be to foul to thy self || [152] Allas / wel oghten they thanne haue desdayn / to ben

seruauntz & thralles to synne / & soore ben ashamed of hem self/ [153] þat god of his endelees goodnesse / hath set hem in heigh estat' or yeuen hem wit' strengthe of body / heele / beautee / prosperitee / [154] and boghte hem fro the deeth with his herte blood: þat they so vnkyndely agayns his gentilesse / quyten hym so vileynsly to slawghtre of hir owene soules [155] ¶ O goode god / ye wommen // þat been of so greet beautee / remembreth yow / of the prouerbe of Salomon || he seith / [156] likneth a fair womman þat is a fool of hire body / lyk to a ryng of gold / þat were in the groyn of a Sowe / [157] for right as a Sowe wroteth in euerich ordure: so wroteth she hire beaute in stynkynge ordure of synne.

[*later*] nota de pulcritudine Mulierum malarum]

·3· [158] ¶ The thridde cause / þat oughte moeue a man to Contricion / is drede of the day of dome / and of the horrible peynes of helle / [159] ffor as Seint Ierome seith / At euery tyme / þat me remembreth of the day of dome / I quake / [160] for whan I ete and drynke / or what so þat I do / euere semeth me / þat the trompe sowneth in myn ere / [161] Riseth ye vp þat ben dede & cometh to the Iugement [162] ¶ O goode god / muchel oghte a man to drede swich a Iugement/ ther as we shullen ben alle / as seith Seint Poul / biforn the Sete / of oure lord Iħu crist/ [163] where as he shal maken / a general congregacioñ / where / as no man may ben absent' [164] for certes / there ne auaileth noon essoyne / ne excusacioñ / [165] and nat oonly / þat oure defautes shullen be Iuged / but eek þat alle oure werkes / shullen openly be knowe / [166] And as þat seith Seint' [1]Bernard / ther nd shal no pletynge auaile / ne no sleighte ¶ we shullen yeue rekenynge of euerich ydel word / [167] there shul we han a Iuge / þat may nat ben deceyued / ne corrupt'. and why: for certes / alle oure thoghtes / ben descouered as to hym / ne for prayere / ne for mede / he wol nat ben corrupt' [168] and therfore seith Salomon || the wrathe of god [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]

ne wol nat spare no wight/ for prayere / ne for yifte / And therfore / at the day of dome / ther nys noon hope to escape ‖ [169] Wherfore / as seith Seint Anselme ‖ fful gret anguisse / shullen the synful folk haue / at that tyme / [170] ther shal the stierne & wrothe Iuge / sitte aboue / and vnder hym / the horrible pit of helle open to destroye hym þat moot biknowen hise synnes / whiche synnes / openly ben shewed biforn god / and biforn euery creature / [171] and on the left syde / mo deueles than herte may bithynke! / for to harye and drawe the synful soules / to the pyne of helle / [172] and with Inne the hertes of folk/ shal be the bityng conscience / & with oute forth / shal be the world al brennynge / [173] Whider shal thanne / the wrechched synful man fle to hyde hym / certes / he may nat hyde hym / he moste come forth and shewe hym ‖ [174] for certes / as seith Seint Ierome / the erthe shal caste hym / out of hym / and the See also / & the Eyr also / þat shal ben / ful of thonder clappes & lightnynges ‖ [175] Now soothly / who so wel remembreth hym of thise thynges / I gesse that his synne shal nat torne hym in delit/ but to gret sorwe / for drede of the peyne of helle ‖ [176] And therfore / seith Iob to god ‖ Suffre lord / þat I may awhile biwayle / & wepe er I go / with oute returnynge to the dirke lond / coue*r*ed / with the derknesse of deeth / [177] to the lond of mysese & of derknesse / where as is the shadwe of deeth / where as ther is / noon ordre / or ordinañce / but grisly drede. þat euere shal laste [178] ¶ Lo here may ye seen / þat Iob preyde respit awhile / to biwepe and wayle his trespas / for soothly / o day of respit/ is bettre than al the tresor of this world / [179] And for as muche / as a man may acquyte hym self biforn god by penitence in this world / and nat by tresor // therfore sholde he preye to god / to yeue hym respit awhile / to biwepe & biwaylen his trespas / [180] for certes / al the sorwe þat a man myghte make fro the bigynnyng

of the world / nys but a litel thyng' at regard of the sorwe of helle [181] ¶ The cause / why þat Iob clepeth helle / the lond of derknesse / [182] vnderstondeth [1]that he clepeth it lond / or erthe / for it is stable & neuere shal faile / dirk'. for he þat is in helle / hath defaute of light material / [183] for certes the derke light' þat shal come out of the fyr þat euere shal brenne / shal turne hym al to peyne / þat is in helle / for it sheweth hym / to the horrible deueles / þat hym tormenten / [184] couered with the derknesse of deeth || that is to seyn / þat he þat is in helle shal haue defaute of the sighte of god / for certes the sighte of god / is the lyf perdurable || [185] The derknesse of deeth / ben the synnes þat the wrecched man hath doon / whiche þat destourben hym / to se the face of god / right as a dirk clowde bitwixe vs and the sonne' [186] ¶ Lond of myseise / by cause þat ther ben .iij. maneres of defautes agayns .iij. thynges / þat folk of this world han in this present lyf || that is to seyn / honours / delices / and rychesses || [187] Agayns honour / han they in helle / shame & confusion' [188] for wel ye woot' þat men clepen honour / the reuerence / þat man dooth to man / but in helle / is noon honour ne reuerence / for certes / namoore reuerence / shal be doon to a kyng' than to a knaue || [189] for which / god seith / by the prophete' Ieremye || thilke folk' þat me despisen / shulle ben in despit' [190] ¶ Honour is eek clepid greet lordshipe / ther shal no wight seruen oother / but of harm and torment' || Honour is eek clepid / greet dignytee & heighnesse / but in helle shul they ben al fortroden of deueles || [191] As god seith || the horrible deueles / shullen goon & comen vp on the heuedes of dampned folk || And this is / for as muche as the heyere þat they were in this present lyf / the moore shulle they ben abated and defouled in helle [192] ¶ Agayns the richesse of this world / shul they han myseyse of pouerte / and this pouerte shal be in .iiij. thynges / [193] In defaute of tresor / of which

þat dauid seith || the riche folk' þat embraceden & oneden al hir herte to tresor of this world / shulle slepen / in the slepynge of deeth / and no thyng' ne shal they fynden in hire handes / of al hire tresor || [194] And moore ouer / the Misayse of helle / shal ben in defaute of mete & drynke / [195] for god seith thus by Moyses || they shul ben wasted with honger / and the bryddes of helle / shul deuouren hem / *with* bitter deeth / and the galle of the dragon / shal ben hire drynke / and the venym of the dragon / hire morsels || [196] And forther ouer / hire Miseyse / shal ben / in defaute of clothyng' for they shullen ben naked in body / as of clothyng' saue the fyr / in which they brenne & othere filthes / [197] and naked shul they ben of soule / of alle manere vertues / which þat is / the clothyng of soule / where. [1] ben thanne the gaye robes / & the softe shetes / & the smale shertes [198] ¶ Lo / what seith god of hem / by the prophete Ysaye || that vnder hem / shul ben strawed Moththes / & hire couertures / shullen ben of wormes of helle [199] ¶ And forther ouer / hire myseyse / shal ben in defaute of frendes / for he is nat pouere / þat hath goode frendes / but there is no freend / [200] for neither god / ne no creature shal ben freend to hem / and euerich of hem / shal haten oother / *with* deedly hate || [201] the sones & the doghtren / shullen rebellen agayns fader & moder / and kynrede agayns kynrede / and chiden & despisen / euerich of hem oother / bothe day & nyght || as god seith / by the prophete Michias [202] ¶ And the louynge children þat whilom loueden so flesshly euerich oother / wolden euerich of hem eten oother / if they myghte || [203] for how sholde they louen hem togidre / in the peyne of helle / whan they hateden euerich of hem oother / in the prosperitee of this lyf / [204] for truste wel / hire flesshly loue / was dedly hate / as seith the prophete dauid: who so þat loueth wikkednesse / he hateth his soule / [205] and who so hateth his owene soule / certes / he may loue noon oother wight

in no manere / [206] and therfore / in helle is no solas / ne no frendshipe / but euere / the moore flesshly kynredes þat ben in helle / the moore cursynges / the moore chidynges / and the moore dedly hate / ther is among hem [207] ¶ And forther ouer / they shul haue defaute / of alle manere delices / for certes / delices ben after the appetites of the .v. wittes / as Sighte /. Herynge /. Smellynge /. Sauorynge /. and touchynge / [208] but in helle / hire sighte / shal be ful of dirknesse & of smoke: and therfore ful of teerys / and hire herynge / ful of waymentynge and of gryntynge of teeth / as seith Iħu crist [209] Hire nose-thirles / shul ben ful of stynkynge stynk || And as seith Ysaye the prophete || hire sauorynge / shal be ful of bitter galle / [210] & touchynge of al hir body / ycouered with fyr þat neuere shal quenche / & with wormes / þat neuere shul dyen / as god seith / by the mowth of Ysaye || [211] And for as muche / as they shul nat wene / þat they may dyen for peyne / and by hire deeth fle fro peyne / that may they vnderstonde in the word of Iob || that seith / there as is the shadwe of deþ / [212] ¶ Certes / a shadwe / hath the liknesse of the thyng / of which it is shadwe / but shadwe / is nat the same thyng of which it is shadwe || [213] right so / fareth the peyne of helle / it is lyk deeth / for the horrible angwissħ / and why / for it peyneth [1]hem euere / as thogh men sholde dye anon / but certes they shal nat dye / [214] for as seith Seint Gregorie / to. wrecche kaityues / shal be deeth with oute deeth / & ende with outen ende /. & defaute with oute failynge / [215] for hire deeth / shal alwey lyuen / & hire ende shal euere mo bigynne / & hire defaute / shal nat faile / [216] And therfore /. seith Seint Iohn the Euaungelist || they shullen folwe deeth / & they shal nat fynde hym / & they shul desiren to dye / and deeth shal fle fro hem || [217] And eek Iob seith / þat in helle / is noon ordre of rewle / [218] and al be it so / þat god hath creat alle thynges in right ordre / & no thyng with

outen ordre / but alle thynges / ben ordeyned & nombred / yet nathelees they þat ben dampned / ben no thyng' in ordre / ne holden noon ordre / [219] for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt || [220] for as the prophete dauid seith / god shal destroye / the fruyt of the erthe / as fro hem / ne water / ne shal yeue hem no moysture / ne the Eyr no refresshyng' ne fyr no light || [221] for as seith Seint Basile || the brennynge of the fyr of this world / shal god yeuen in helle / to hem þat ben dampned / [222] but the light' & the cleernesse / shal he yeuen in heuene to hise children / right as the goode man / yeueth flessh̄ to hise children / & bones to hise houndes / [223] and for they shullen haue noon hope to escape / seith Seint Iob / atte laste / þat ther shal horrour & grisly drede dwelle with outen ende // [224] Horrour is alwey drede of harm þat is to come / & this drede shal euere dwelle in the hertes / of hem þat ben dampned / and therfore han they lorn al hire hope / for .vij. causes || [225] ffirst' for god þat is hir Iuge / shal be *with* oute *mercy* to hem / ne they may nat plese hym / ne noon of hise halwes / ne they ne may yeue no thyng' for hire raunsoñ / [226] ne they haue no Voys / to speke to hym / ne they may nat flo fro peyne / ne they haue no goodnesse in hem that they may shewe / to delyuere hem fro peyne / [227] And therfore seith Salomon || the wikked man dieþ & whan he is deed / he shal haue noon hope / to escape fro peyne [228] ¶ Who so thanne wolde wel vnderstonde thise peynes & bithynke hym wel / þat he hath disserued thilke peynes for hise synnes / *certes* he sholde haue moore talent' to siken & to wepe / than for to syngen & to pleye || [229] for as þat seith Salomon / who so þat hadde the science to knowe the peynes þat ben establised & ordeyned for synne / he wolde make sorwe / [230] thilke science / as seith Seint Augustyn / maketh a man / to waymente in his herte /

[231] ¶ The .iiij^e. poynt that [1]oghte make a man The .iiij.e mevere to contricioun.

haue contricioñ· / is the sorweful remembrance of the good / þat he hath left to doon here in erthe / & eek / the good þat he hath lorn / [232] Soothly / the goode werkes þat he hath left' either they ben the goode werkes þat he wroghte er he fil in to deedly synne / or ellis / the goode werkes þat he wroghte / whil he lay in synne / [233] Soothly / the goode werkes þat he dide biforn þat he fil in synne / ben al mortefied / & astoned / & dulled / by the ofte synnynge / [234] That othere goode werkes þat he wroghte / whil he lay in dedly synne / they ben outrely dede / as to the lyf / perdurable in heuene || [235] thanne thilke goode werkes þat ben mortefied by ofte synnyng' whiche goode werkes he dide while he was in charitee / ne mowe neuere quyken agayn / with oute verray penitence / [236] And ther of seith god / by the mowth of Ezechiel / that if the rightful man returne agayn from his rightwisnesse / & werke wikkednesse / shal he lyue? / [237] nay / for alle the goode werkes þat he hath wrought' ne shulle neuere ben in remembrance / for he shal dye / in his synne / [238] and vp on thilke chapitre / seith Seint Gregorie thus || that we shul vnderstonde this / principally / [239] that whan we doon dedly synne / it is for nawght thanne to reherse / or drawen in to memorie / the goode werkes þat we han wrought' biforn [240] ¶ for certes / in the werkynge of the dedly synne / ther is no trust to no good werk' þat we han doon biforn / that is to seyn / as for to haue ther by / the lyf perdurable in heuene / [241] but nathelees / the goode werkes quyken agayn and comen agayn & helpen & auaylen / to haue the lyf perdurable in heuene / whan we han Contricioñ / [242] but soothly the goode werkes þat men doon / whil þat they been in dedly synne / for as muche / as they weren doon in dedly synne / they may neuere quyken agayn / [243] for certes / thyng þat neuere hadde lyf / may neuere quyken / and natheles / al be it' þat they ne auayle nought' to han the lyf perdurable / yet auaylen

they / to abreggen of the peyne of helle / or ellis / to gete temporal richesses / [244] or ellis / þat god wole the rather enlumyne & lighte / the herte of the synful man to han repentance: [245] And eek they auailen / for to vsen a man to doon goode werkes / þat the feend / haue the lasse power of his soule / [246] and thus the curteys lord Iħu crist' ne wole þat no good werk be lost' for in som what' it shal auayle / [247] but for as muche as the goode werkes / þat men doon whil they ben in good lyf/ ben al amortised by synne folwynge: / and eek sith þat alle the [1]goode werkes þat men doon / whil they ben in dedly synne / ben outrely dede / as for to han / the lyf perdurable / [248] wel may þät man / þat no good werk ne dooth / synge thilke newe frenshe song' Iay tout perdu / mon temps & mon labour ‖ [249] ffor certes synne bireueth a man / bothe goodnesse of nature / & eek the goodnesse of grace / [250] for soothly / the grace of the holy goost' fareth lyk' fyr / þat may nat ben ydel / for fyr faileth / anon / as it forleteth his werkynge / and right so grace faileth / anon as it forleteth his werkynge / [251] thanne leseth the synful man / the goodnesse of glorie / that oonly / is bihight to goode men þat labouren and werken / [252] Wel may he be sory thanne þat oweth al his lyf to god / as longe as he hath lyued / and eek as longe as he shal lyue / þat no goodnesse ne hath / to paye with his dette to god / to whom he oweth al his lyf / [253] for truste wel / he shal yeue acountes as seith Seint Bernard / of alle the goodes þat han ben yeuen hym in this present lyf / and how he hath hem despended / [254] nat so muche / þat ther shal nat perisse an heer of his heed / ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme / þat he ne shal yeue of it a rekenynge

[255] ¶ The .v.^the^ thyng' þat oghte moeue a man to Contricioñ / is remembrance of the passion þat oure lord Iħu crist' suffred for oure synnes / [256] for as seith Seint Bernard / Whil þat I lyue I shal haue remem-

The .v.^the^ mevere t[o] contricioñ

brance of the trauailes þat oure lord Iħu crist suffred / in prechynge / [257] his werynesse in trauailynge / hise temptacions whan he fasted / hise longe wakynges whan he preyed / hise teerys whan þat he weep for pitee of good peple / [258] the wo / and the shame / & the filthe þat men seyden to hym / of the foule spittyng þat men spitte on his face / of the buffettes that men yaue hym / of the fowle Mowwes & of the repreues þat men to hym seyden / [259] of the nayles / with whiche he was nayled to the croys / and of al the remenant of his passiõ / þat he suffred for my synnes / and no thyng for his gilt || [260] And ye shal vnderstonde / þat in mannes synne / is euery manere ordre of ordinance / turned vp so down / [261] for it is sooþ þat god /. and reson /. and sensualitee. & the body of man / ben so ordeyned / þat euerich of thise .iiij. thynges / sholde haue lordshipe ouer that oother / [262] as thus /. god sholde haue lordshipe ouer resoñ / & resoñ ouer Sensualitee / & Sensualitee ouer the body of man / [263] but soothly / whan man synneth / al this ordre / or ordinance / is turned vp so down / [264] and therfore [1]thanne / for as muche as the reson of man / ne wol nat be subget ne obeisañt to god / þat is his lord by right / ther-fore leseth it the lordshipe / þat it sholde haue in Sensualitee / & eek ouer the body of man / [265] and why / for Sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoñ / and by that wey / leseth resoñ the lordshipe ouer Sensualitee & ouer the body / [266] for right as reson is rebel to god / right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to reson & the body also || [267] and certes this desordinañce & this rebellioñ / oure lord Iħu crist aboghte / vp on his precious body ful deere / and herkneth in which wise || [268] for as muche thanne / as reson is rebel to god / therfore is man worthy to haue sorwe / and to be deed / [269] this suffred oure lord Iħu crist for man / after þat he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple and destreyned &

bounde so / þat the blood brast out at euery nayl of hise handes / as seith Seint Augustyn || [270] And forther ouer for as muchel as reson of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee when it may / therfore / is man worthy to han shame / and this suffrede oure lord Iħu crist for man whan they spette in his visage || [271] and forther ouer / for as muche thanne / as the kaytif body of man / is rebel / bothe to resoñ & to sensualitee / therfore / it is worthy the deeth / [272] and this suffred oure lord Iħu crist for man vp on the croys / where as ther nas no part of his body free with oute gret peyne & bitter passioñ / [273] and al this suffred Iħu crist þat neuere forfeted || [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] to muchel am I peyned for the thynges þat I neuere deserued and to muche defouled for sheñdshipe / þat man is worthy to haue || [274] And therfore / may the synful man wel seye / as seith Seint Bernard / Acursed be the bitternesse of my synne / for which / ther moste be suffred so muche bitternesse / [275] for certes after the diuerse discordañces of oure wikkednesses / was the passioñ of Iħu crist ordeyned in diuerse thynges || [276] As thus || Certes synful mannes soule is bitraysed of the deuel by coueitise of temporel prosperitee & scorned by deceyte / whan he cheseth flesshly delites / and yet is it tormented by inpacience of Aduersitee / and byspet by seruage & subieccioñ of synne / and atte laste / it is slayn fynally || [277] for this desordenañce of synful man / was Iħu crist first bitraysed / and after that was he bownde / þat cam for to vnbynde vs / of Synne & of peyne || [278] thanne was he biscorned / þat oonly sholde ben honoured in alle thynges of alle thynges / [279] thanne was his visage þat oghte be desired to be seyn of alle mankynde in which visage Angels desiren to looke / vileynsly bispet / [280] thanne was he skourged / þat no thyng hadde agilt and fynally / thanne was he crucefied & slayn || [281] thanne was acompli[1]ced the

word of Ysaie || He was wounded for oure mysdedes / & defouled by oure felonyes [282] ¶ Now sith þat Iħu crist' took vp on hym self the peyne of alle oure wikkednesses / muchel oghte synful man wepe & biwayle / þat for hise synnes / goddes sone of heuene / sholde al this peyne endure [283] ¶ The .vj.the thyng' þat oghte moeue a man to Contricioñ / is the hope of .iij. thynges / that is to seyn / foryeuenesse of synne / and the yifte of grace wel for to do / and the glorie of heuene / *with* which god shal gerdone man for hise goode dedes || [284] And for as muche / as Iħu crist' yeueth vs thise yiftes of his largesse & of his sou*e*reyn bountee / therfore is he clepid Iħus Nazarenus rex Iudeor*um* [285] ¶ Iħu is for to seyn / Saueour / or Sauacioñ / on whom' men shal hope / to haue foryifnesse of synnes / which þat is p*ro*prely / Sauacion of synnes / [286] and therfore / seyde the A*u*ngel to Ioseph || thow shalt clepe his name Iħus / þat shal saue his peple of hire synnes / [287] And heerof / seith Seint Peter || ther is noon oother name vnder heuene þat is yeue to any man / by which a man may be saued / but oonly Iħus [288] ¶ Nazarenus / is as muche for to seye / as florissynge / In which a man shal hope / þat he / þat yeueth hym remissioñ of synnes / shal yeue hym eek' g*r*ace wel to do / for in the flour / is hope of fruyt' in tyme comynge / and in foryifnesse of synnes / hope of g*r*ace wel to do [289] ¶ I was at the dore of thyn herte seith Iħus / & clepede for to entre / he þat opneth to me / shal haue foryifnesse of synne / [290] I wol entre in to hym by my g*r*ace / and sowpe *with* hym / by the goode werkes þat he shal doon / whiche werkes / ben the foode of god / and he shal sowpe *with* me / by the grete ioye þat I shal yeue hym || [291] thus shal man hope / þat for hise werkes of penance / god shal yeue hym his regne / as he byheteth hym in the gospel.

The .vj.the m[evere to] con[triciouñ]

In what manere o[ghte] ben thy contriciouñ

[292] ¶ Now shal man vnderstonde / in which

manere shal ben his contricioñ / I seye / that it shal ben vniuersal and total / this is to seyn / a man shal be verray repentañt/ for alle hise synnes þat he hath doon / in delit of his thoght'. for delit is ful perilous / [293] for ther þen two manere of consentynges / that oon of hem / is clepid / consentynge of affeccion whan a man / is moeued to do synne / and thanne deliteth hym longe / for to thynke on that synne / [294] and his reson / aperceyueth wel þat it is synne / agayns the lawe of god / and yet his resoñ refreyneth nat his fool delit/ or talent' though he seeth wel apertly / þat it is agayns the reuerence of god / al though his resoñ / ne consente nat / to doon the [1]synne in dede / [295] yet seyn somme doctours / þat swich delit þat dwelleþ longe / it is ful perilous / al be neuer so lite / [296] and also / a man sholde sorwe /.namely / for al that euere he hath desired agayn the lawe of god / with parfit consentynge of his resoñ / for ther of is no doute / þat it is dedly synne / in the consentynge / [297] for certes ther is no dedly synne / þat it nas first' in mannes thoght' & after that' in his delit' & so forth / in to consentynge & in to dede / [298] Wherfore I seye / þat many men ne repenten hem neuere of swyche thoghtes & delites / ne neuere shryuen hem of it' but oonly / of the dede of grete synnes outward [299] ¶ Wher fore I seye / þat swiche wikked delites & wikked thoghtes / ben subtil bigyleris of hem þat shullen ben dampned [300] ¶ Moore ouer / man oghte to sorwen for hise wikked wordes / as wel / as hise wikked dedes / for certes / the repentance of a singuler synne & nat repente of alle hise othere synnes || or ellis repente hym of alle hise othere synnes / and nat of a synguler synne / may nat auayle / [301] for certes / god almyghty / is al good / and therfore / outher he foryeueth al / or ellis right noght/ [302] And her of seith Seint Augustyn ¶ I woot certeynly / [303] þat god is enemy to euerich synnere / And how thanne / he þat obserueth o synne / shal he haue foryeuenesse of the

remenant' of hise othere synnes? nay? [304] ¶ And forther ouer Contricioñ / sholde be wonder sorweful and anguissous / and ther fore / yeueth hym god / pleynly his mercy / and therfore / whan my soule was anguissous *with* Inne me / I hadde remembrañce of god / *þat* my prayere myghte come to hym [305] ¶ fforther ouer Cont*ri*cioñ moste be continuel / and *þat* man haue stedefast p*ur*pos to shryue hym / & for to amende hym of his lyf / [306] for soothly / whil Contricion lasteth / man may euere haue hope of foryeuenesse / And of this / cometh hate of synne *þat* destroyeth synne / bothe in hym self' & eek in othere folk' at his power / [307] for which seith Dauid / ye *þat* louen god / hateth wikkednesse / for trusteth wel / to loue god / is for to loue that he loueth / & hate that he hateth

[308] ¶ The laste thyng' *þat* men shal vnderstonde in Contricioñ / is this / wher of auaileth Contricioñ ¶ I seye / *þat* som tyme / Contricioñ delyuereth man fro synne / [309] of which *þat* Dauid seith || I seye quod Dauid / that is to seyn / I. purposed fermely to shryue me / & thow lord relessedest my synne / [310] and right so as Contricioñ auaileth nat / *with* outen sad purpos of shrifte / if man haue oportunytee? right' so / litel worth is shrifte / or satisfaccioñ / with oute Contricioñ / [311] And moore / Contricion destroyeth the prisoñ of helle [1]and maketh wayk' & feble / the strengthes of the deueles / & restoreth the yiftes of the holy goost' & of alle goode v*er*tues / [312] and it clenseth the soule of synne & delyuereth the soule fro the peyne of helle / & fro the compaignye of the deuel / and fro the seruage of synne / & restoreth it' to alle goodes espirituels & to the compaignye *com*munyoñ of holy chirche / [313] and forther ouer/ it maketh hym / *þat* whilom was sone of Ire / to be sone of grace / and alle thise thynges / be preued by holy writ / [314] and therfore / he *þat* wolde sette his entente / to thise thynges / he were ful

wys / for soothly / he ne sholde nat thanne in al his lyf / haue corage to synne / but· yeue his body & al his herte / to the seruyce of Iħu crist· & ther of doon hym hommage / [315] for certes / oure swete lord Iħu crist hath sparid vs so debonairly in oure folies / þat if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule / a sory song we myghten alle synge .. . .

¶ Explicit prima pars penitencie: ¶ Et incipit secunda pars eiusdem . . .

[316]

THe seconde partie of Penitence / is Confessioñ / that is signe of Contricioñ [317] ¶ Now shul ye vnderstonde / what is Confessioñ / & wheither it oghte nedes be doon / or noon / & whiche thynges ben couenable to verray Confessioñ

[318] ¶ ffirst· shaltow vnderstonde / þat Confession is verray shewynge of synnes to the preest· [319] this is to seyn verray / for he moot confesse hym of alle the condicioñs þat bilongen to his synne / as ferforþ as he kan / [320] al moot be seyd / & no thyng excused / ne hid / ne forwrapped / & nat auañce hym of hise goode werkes || [321] And forther ouer / it is necessarie to vnderstonde / whennes þat synnes spryngen / & how they encressen / & whiche they ben

[322] ¶ Of the spryngynge of Synnes / as seith Seint Paul in this wise || that right as by a man / synne entred first· in to this world / and thurgh that synne deth / right so thilke deth entred in to alle men þat synneden / [323] and this man was Adam / by whom synne entred in to this world / whan he brak· the comandementz of god / [324] and therfore / he þat first was so myghty / þat he sholde nat haue deyed / bicam swich oon / þat he moste nedes dye wheither he wolde or noon / & al his progenye þat is in this world / þat in thilke man synneden [325] ¶ Looke þat· in thestat of Innocence / whan Adam & Eue /

naked weren in Paradys [1] and no thyng' ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse / [326] how þat the serpent' þat was moost wily of alle othere bestes þat god hadde maked / seyde to the wo*m*man || why comanded god to yow / ye sholde nat eten of euery tree in Paradys ? || [327] the wo*m*man answerde / Of the fruyt quod she of the trees in Paradys / we feden vs / but soothly / of the fruyt of the tree þat is in the myddel of Paradys / god forbad vs for to ete / ne nat touche it/ list *per* auenture we sholde dyen || [328] the serpent seyde to the wo*m*man / nay / nay / ye shul nat dyen of deth / for sothe god woot' þat what day þat ye eten ther of / youre eyen shulle opne / & ye shul ben as goddes / konnynge good & harm || [329] the womman saugh / þat the tree was good to fedynge / and fair to the eyen / & delitable to sighte /' she took of the fruyt' of the tree & eet it' & yaf it to hire housbonde / & he eet' & anon the eyen of hem bothe opnede / [330] and whan þat they knewe þat they were naked / they sowed of ffyge leues in manere of breches / to hiden hire membres || [331] Here may ye seen / þat dedly synne / hath first' suggestioñ of the feend / as sheweth heere by the Naddre / and afterward the delit of the flessh̄ / as sheweth heere by Eua / and after that' the consentynge of resoñ / as sheweth heere by Adam / [332] ffor truste wel / thogh so were / þat the feend tempted oon / that is to seyn the flessh̄ / and the flessh hadde delit in the beautee of the fruyt' deffended /' yet *cer*tes til þat reson / that is to seyn Adam / consented to the etyng of the fruyt' yet stood he / in the estat of Innocence [333] ¶ Of thilke Adam / toke we thilke synne original / for of hym / flesshly descended be we alle & engendred / of vile & corrupt matere / [334] and whan the soule / is put in oure body / right anoon is contract' original synne / and that / þat was erst' but oonly peyne of concupiscence / is afterward / bothe peyne & synne / [335] And ther fore be we alle yborn sones of

wraththe & of dampnacioñ perdurable / if it nere baptesme / þat we receyuen / which bynymeþ vs the culpe / but for sothe / the peyne dwelleth with vs as to temptacioñ / which peyne / highte concupiscence / [336] and this concupiscence / whan it is wrongfully disposed / or ordeyned in man / it maketh hym coueite by couetise of flessh̄ / flesshly synne / by sighte of hise eyen / as to erthely thynges / And eek coueitise of heynesse by pryde of herte

[337] ¶ Now as to speke of the firste coueitise / that is concupiscence / after the lawe of oure membres þat weren lawefulliche ymaked & by rightful Iugement of god / [338] I seye / for as muche / as man is nat obeisañt to god that is his lord / therfore / is the flessh̄ to hym desobeisañt thurgh concupiscence / which þat yet is clepid norissynne of synne & occasioñ of synne / [339] therfore / al the while þat a man hath in hym the peyne of concupiscence / it is impossible / but he be tempted som tyme & moeued in his flessh to synne / [340] and this thyng may nat faile as longe as he lyueth / it may wel wexe feble and faile by vertu of baptesme & by the grace of god / thurgh penitence / [341] but fully ne shal it neuere quenche / þat he ne shal somtyme / be moeued in hym self/ but if he were al refreided by siknesse / or by malefice of sorcerye / or colde drynkes / [342] ffor lo / what seith Seint.Paul || the flessh̄ coueiteth agayn the spirit / & the spirit agayn the flessh̄ / they ben so contrarie & so stryuen / þat a man may nat alwey do as he wolde [343] ¶ The same Seynt Paul / after his grete penañce in water & in londe / in water by nyght & by day in gret peril & in gret peyne in londe / in famyn & thurst in cold and clothlees & ones stooned almoost to the deth / [344] yet seyde he / Allas .I. kaytif man / who shal delyuere me fro the prison of my kaytif body || [345] And Seint Ierom / whanne he longe tyme hadde woned in desert where as he hadde no compaignye / but of wilde bestes / where as he hadde

no mete / but herbes / & water to his drynke / ne no bed / but the naked erthe / for which his flessh was blak as an Ethiopen for hete & ney destroyed for cold /. [346] yet seyde he / þat the brennynge of lecherye / boylede in al his body [347] ¶ Wherfore I woot wel sikerly / þat they ben deceyued / þat seyn / they þat ne be nat tempted in hire body / [348] Witnesse on Seint Iame the Apostel / that seith / that euery wight is tempted in his owene concupiscence / that is to seyn / that euerich of vs / hath matere & occasioñ / to be tempted / of the norissynge of synne. þat is in his body || [349] And therfore / seith Seint Ioñ the Euaungelist || If þat we seyn / þat we be *with* oute synne / we deceyuen vs selue and trouthe is nat in vs /

[350] ¶ Now shul ye vnderstonde in what manere / þat synne wexeth & encresceth in man ¶ the firste thyng is thilke norissynge of synne / of which I spak biforn / thilke flesshly concupiscence / [351] and after that comth the subieccioñ of the deuel / this is to seyn the deueles bely / *with* which he bloweth in man / the fyr of flesshly concupiscence / [352] and after that a man bythynketh hym / wheither he wol doon or no / thilke thyng to which he is tempted / [353] and thanne / if þat a man *with* stonde [1]and wayue the firste entisynges of his flessh / & of the feend / thanne is it no synne / and if so be / þat he do nat so / thanne feeleth he anon a flawmbe of delit/ [354] and thanne is it good / to be war and kepe hym wel / or ellis he wol falle anon in to consentynge of synne / & thanne wol he do it/ if he may haue tyme & place || [355] And of this matere seith Moyses / by the deuel / in this manere ¶ The feend seith || I wol chace & pursue the man / by wikked suggestioñ / and I wol hente hym / by moeuyng or stiryng of synne / & .I. wol departe my prise / or my preye by deliberacioñ / & my lust shal ben acompliced in delit || I wol drawe my swerd in consentynge / [356] for certes / right as a swerd departeth a thyng in two peces / right

so consentynge / departeth god fro man / and thanne wol I sle hym *with* myn hand in dede of synne || thus seyth the feend / [357] for certes / thanne is a man al deed in soule / and thus is synne acompliced / by temptacioñ / by delit' & by consentynge / & thanne is the synne clepid actuel

[358] ¶ ffor sothe / synne is in two maneres / outher it venyal / or dedly synne || Soothly / whan man loueth any creature / moore than Iħu crist oure creatour / thanne is it dedly synne / and venial synne is it' if man loue Iħu crist lasse than hym oghte / [359] for sothe / the dede of this venial synne is ful *per*ilous / for it amenuseth the loue *þat* men sholde han to god moore & moore / [360] and therfore / if a man charge hym self *with* manye swiche venial synnes / certes / but if so be / *þat* he som tyme descharge hym of hem by shrifte / they mowe ful lightly amenuse in hym / al the loue / *þat* he hath to Iħu crist' [361] and in this wise skippeth Venial / in to Dedly synne / for *cer*tes / the moore *þat* a man chargeth his soule / *with* venial synnes / the moore is he enclyned to falle in dedly synne / [362] And therfore / lat vs nat be necligent' to deschargen vs of venial synnes / for the *prouer*be seith / that manye smale maketh a greet || [363] And herkne this ensample || A greet wawe of the See / comth som tyme / *with* so greet a violence / that it drencheth the Ship*e* / and the same harm / doon som tyme / the smale dropes of water / *þat* entreth thurgh a litel creuesse in to the Thurrok / & in the botme of the ship*e* / if men be so necligent' *þat* men ne descharge hem nat by tyme / [364] and therfore / al thogh ther be a difference / bitwixe thise two causes of drenchynge / algates the Ship*e* is dreynt [365] ¶ right so fareth it som tyme of dedly synne / & of anoyouse venials synnes / whan they multiplie in a man so gretly / *þat* thilke worldly thynges *þat* he loueth / thurgh which he synneth venially / is as gret in his herte / as the loue of [1]god / or moore / [366]

and therfore / the loue of euery thyng' þat is nat byset in god / ne doon principally for goddes sake / al þat a man loue it lasse than god / yet is it venial synne / [367] & dedly synne / whan the loue of any thyng' weyeth in the herte of man / as muche / as the loue of god / or moore [368] ¶ Dedly synne / as seith Seynt' Augustyn is / whan man turneth his herte fro god / which that is verray souereyn bowntee / þat may nat chaunge / & yeueth his herte / to a thyng/ þat may chaunge & flitte / [369] and certes / that is euery thyng' saue god of heuene / for sooth is / þat if a man yeue his loue / the which þat he oweth al to god with al his herte / vn to a creature / certes as muche of his loue as he yeueth to thilke creature / so muche he bireueth fro god / [370] and therfore / dooth he synne / for he þat is dettour to god / ne yeldeth nat to god al his dette / that is to seyn / al the loue of his herte /

[371] ¶ Now sith man vnderstondeth generally / which is venial synne / thanne is it couenable / to tellen specially of synnes / whiche þat many a man per auenture ne demeth hem nat synnes / & ne shryueth hym nat' of the same thynges / & yet nathelees they been synnes / [372] and soothly / as thise clerkes writen / this is to seyn / þat euery tyme þat man eteth or drynketh / moore than suffiseth to the sustenañce of his body / in certeyn he dooth synne || [373] and eek / whan he speketh moore than it nedeth / it is synne || eek' whan he herkneth nat benygnely þe compleynte of the pouere || [374] eek' whan he is in heele of body / and wol nat faste / whan oother folk' fasten / with outen cause resonable || eek/ whan he slepeth moore than nedeth / or whan he comth by thilke encheson / to late to chirche / or to othere werkes of charitee || [375] eek/ whan he vseth his wyf / with oute souereyn desir of engendrure / to honour of god / or for the entente / to yelde to his wyf the dette of his bo[redacted] eek' whan he wol nat visite the syke / & the prisoner / [redacted]

eek / if he loue wyf or child / or oother worldly thyng' moore than reson requereth || eek' if he flatre / or blandise moore than hym oghte / for any necessitee || [377] eek' if he amenuse / or withdrawe the almesse of the pouere || eek' if he apparaileth his mete / moore deliciously / than nede is / or ete it to hastily / by likerousnesse || [378] eek/ if he tale vanytes / at chirche / or at goddes seruyce / or þat he be a talkere of ydel wordes / of folye / or of vileynye / for he shal yelde acounte of it' at the day of dome || [379] eek / whan he biheteth / or assureth to do thynges / þat he ne may nat perfourne || eek/ whan þat he / by lightnesse / or folye / mysseyth / or scorneth his neighebore [380] [1]eek' whan he hath any wikked suspecion of thyng' ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse || [381] thise thynges / & mo with oute nombre ben synnes / as seith Seint Augustyn /

[382] ¶ Now shalmen vnderstonde / þat al be it so / þat noon erthely man may eschewe alle veniale synnes / yet may he refreyne hem by the brennynge loue þat he hath to oure lord Iħu crist' and by preyeres & confession / & othere goode werkes / so / þat it shal but litel greue || [383] for as seiþ Seint Augustyn || If a man loue god in swich manere / þat al that euere he dooth / is in the loue of god / or for the loue of god verraily for he brenneth in the loue of god / [384] looke / how muche þat a drope of water þat falleth in a furneys ful of fyr/ anoyeth / or greueth / so muche / anoyeth a venial synne vn to a man / þat is perfit' in the loue of Iħu crist || [385] Men may also / refreyne venial synne / by receyuynge worthily / of the precious body of Iħu crist' [386] by receyuynge eek/ of holy water / by almes dede / by general confession / of Confiteor / at masse & at Complyn / & by blessynge of Bisshopes / & of preestes / &, by othere goode werkes

¶ De Septem peccatis mortalibus

[387] NOw is it bihouely thyng' to telle / whiche ben dedly synnes / that is to seyn / chieftaynes of synnes / alle they renne in o lees / but in dyuerse manere / now ben they clepid chieftaynes / for as muche as they ben chief / and sprynge of alle othere synnes [388] ¶ Of the roote of thise .vij. synnes / thanne is pryde / the general roote of alle harmes / for of this roote / spryngen certeyn braṅches / as Ire /. Enuye /. Accidie / or Sleuthe /. Auarice / or Coueitise /. to commune vnderstondynge /. Glotonye /. and lecherye ‖ [389] and euerich of thise chief synnes / hath hise braṅches and hise twigges / as shal be declared / in hire chapitres folwynge /

[De] Superbia [*from margin: no break in MS.*]

[390] and though so be / þat no man kan outrely tellen the nombre of twigges & of the harmes þat comen of Pryde / yet wol I shewe a partie of hem / as ye shul vnderstande [391] ¶ Ther is / Inobedience / Auantynge / Ypocrisye / Despit' Arrogaunce / Inpudence / Swellynge of herte / Insolence / Elacioñ / Inpacience / Stryf / Contumacie / Presumpcioñ / Inreuerence / Pertinacie / Veyne glorie / and many another twig' þat I kan nat declare [392] ¶ Inobedient is he / þat desobeieth for despit / to the comandementz of god / & to hise souereins / & to his goostly fader [393] ¶ Auantour / is he þat bosteth / of the [1]harm / or of the bowntee þat he hath doon [394] ¶ Ypocrite is he / that hideth / to shewe hym / swich as he is / and sheweth hym / swich as he nawght is / [395] ¶ Despitous is he / that hath desdeyn of his neighebore / that is to seyn / of his euenecristen / or hath despit/ to doon / that hym oghte to do [396] ¶ Arrogañt is he þat thynketh / þat he hath thilke bountees in hym / þat he hath nat/ or

[The] braunches [of] Pryde

[Ino]bedience:

[Auan]tyng.

De[spitous]

Arroga[nt]

weneth þat he sholde haue hem / by hise desertes / or ellis he demeth / þat he be that he nys nat / [397] ¶ Impudent is he þat for his pryde / hath no shame of his synne [398] ¶ Swellynge of herte is / whan man reioyseth hym of harm þat he hath doon / [399] ¶ Insolent is he / that despiseth in his Iugement alle oother folk/ as to regard of his value / & of his konnynge / & of his spekynge / & of his berynge [400] ¶ Elacioñ is / whan he ne may neither suffre to haue maister ne felawe [401] ¶ Inpacient is he / þat wol nat ben ytaught ne vndernome of his vice / & by stryf/ werreieth trouthe wityngly & deffendeth his folye / [402] ¶ Contumax is he / þat thurgh his Indignacioñ / is agayns euerich auctoritee / or power / of hem þat ben hise souereyns / [403] ¶ Presumpcioñ is / whan a man vndertaketh an Emprise / þat hym oghte nat do / or ellis þat he may nat do / and that is called Surquydie ¶ Inreuerence is / whan men do nat honour / ther as hem oghte to doon / and waiteth / to be reuerenced [404] ¶ Pertinacie / is whan a man deffendeth his folye / & trusteth to muche to his owene wit / [405] Veyne glorie is / for to haue pompe & delit in thise temporel heynesses & glorifie hem / in worldly estatz [406] ¶ Ianglynge is / whan a man speketh to muche biforn folk & clappeth as a Melle / & taketh no kepe / what he seith

Impudent
Swelling of [herte]
Insolent:
Elacioun.
Inpacient.
Contumax.
Presumpcioun.
Inreuerence.
Pertynacie.
Veyn glorye
Ianglynge

[407] ¶ And yet is ther a pryuee spice of pryde / that waiteth / first to be salewed / er he wole salewe / al be he lasse worthy / than that oother is par auenture / and eek he wayteth / or desireth / to sitte / or ellis / to goon aboue hym in the weye / or kisse pax / or ben ensensed / or goon to offrynge biforn his neighebore / [408] and swiche semblable thynges / agayns his duetee per auenture / but þat he hath / his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir / to be magnyfied & honoured / biforn the peple

Desir of worshi[p]

[409] ¶ Now ben ther two maneres of pryde / that oon of hem / is with Inne the herte of man / and that

.ij. maners of pri[de]

oother is *with* oute / [410] of whiche soothly / thise forseyde thynges / & mo than I haue seyd ap*er*te[l]nen to pryde[l] / þ*at* is in the herte of man / And that othere speces of pride ben with oute / [411] but natheles / that oon of thise speces of pride / is signe of that oother / right as the gaye leuesel atte Tau*er*ne / is signe / of the wyn / þ*at* is in the Celer || [412] And this is in manye thynges / as in speche & contenañce / & in out*rag*eous array of clothyng[e] [413] for *cer*tes / if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothyng[e] crist wolde nat so soone haue noted & spoke of the clothyng[e] of thilke riche man in the gospel || [414] And as seith Seint Gregorie / that *pre*cious clothyng[e] is cowpable / for the derthe of it[e] & for his softnesse / & for his strañgenesse & degisynesse / and for the sup*er*fluitee / or for the inordinat scantnesse of it || [415] Allas / may man nat seen as in oure dayes / the synful costlewe array of clothynge / & namely in to muche sup*er*fluitee / or ellis in to desordinat scantnesse

clothing /

[416] ¶ As to the firste synne / that is in sup*er*fluitee of clothynge / which þ*at* maketh it so deere to harm of the peple / [417] nat oonly / the cost of enbrawdynge / the degyse / endentynge / or barrynge / owndynge / palynge / or bendynge / & semblable wast[e] of clooth in vanytee || [418] but ther is also the costlewe furrynge in hir*e* gownes / so muche pownsonynge of chisel / to maken holes / so muche daggynge of sheris / [419] forth / *with* the sup*er*fluitee / in lengthe of the forseyde gownes trailynge in the dong[e] & in the Myre on horse / & eek on foote / as wel / of man / as of wo*m*man / þ*at* al thilke trailynge / is verraily as in effect[e] wasted / consumed / thredbare / & roten *with* dong*e* rather / than it is yeuen to the pouere / to gret damage / of the forseide pouere folk / [420] and that in sondry wise / this is to seyn / þ*at* the moore þ*at* clooth is wasted / the moore moot it coste to the peple for the scarsnesse / [421] and forther ouer / if so be / þ*at* they wolde yeue swiche pownsonyd &

dagged clothynge to the pouere folk/ it is nat conuenient to were / for hire estat ne suffisant to beete hire necessitee / to kepe hem / fro the destemperance of the firmament [422] ¶ Vp on that oother syde / to speke of the horrible desordynat scantnesse of clothyng as ben thise kutted sloppes / or hanselyns / þat thurgh hire shortnesse / ne keuere nat the shameful membres of man to wikke entente / [423] Allas / somme of hem shewen the shape & the boce of hire horrible swollen membres / þat semeth lik the maladie of hirnia / in the wrappynge of hire hoses [424] and eek the buttokes of hem / þat faren as it were the hyndre part of a she Ape / in the fulle of the Moone || [425] And moore ouer / the wrecched swollen membres / þat they shewe thurgh degisynge / in departynge of hire hoses in whit and reed / semeth / þat half hire shameful pryuee membres weren flayn / [426] ¶ [1]And if so be / þat they departen hire hoses in othere colours / as is whit & blew / or whit & blak / or blak & reed / & so forth / [427] thanne semeth it as by variañce of colour / þat half the partie of hire pryuee membres / ben corrupt by the fyr of Seint Antony / or by cancre / or othere swiche meschañces || Yet [428] of the hyndre part of hire buttokes / it is ful horrible for to se / for certes in that partie of hire body / ther as they purgen hire stynkynge ordure / [429] that foule partie / shewe they to the peple proudly in despit of honestetee / which honestetee þat Iħu crist & hise frendes obseruede to shewen in his lyue [430] ¶ Now / as of the outrageous array of wommen / god woot þat thogh the visages of somme of hem / seme ful chaste & debonaire / yet notifie they in hire array of atyr / likerousnesse & pride [431] ¶ I seye nat þat honestetee in clothynge / of man or woman / is vncouenable / but certes the superfluitee / or the desordinat skantitee of clothynge is reprouable / [432] ¶ Also / the synne of Aornement/ or of apparaille / as in thynges þat apertenen to ridynge / as in to manye delicat horses þat ben holden

pride in thinges [that] longeth to rydyn[ge]

for delit' þat they ben so faire / fatte / & costlewe / [433] and also many a vicious knaue mayntened by cause of hem / and in to curious harneys / as in Sadeles / in croupers / peytrels / and brydles couered with precious clothyng' & riche barres & plates of gold & of siluer / [434] for which / god seith / by Zakarie the prophete / ¶ I wol confounde / the ryderes of swiche horses || [435] thise folk' taken litel reward / of the ridynge of goddes sone of heuene / & of his harneys / whan he rood vp on an Asse / & ne hadde noon oother harneys / but the pouere clothes of hise disciples / ne we ne rede nat' þat euere he rood on oother beest' [436] I speke this for the synne of superfluitee / & nat for resoñable honestetee / whan resoñ it requereth [437] ¶ And forther

pride of Meyne: ouer / certes pride is gretly notified in holdynge of gret Meynee / whan they ben of litel profit / or of right no profit' [438] and namely / whan that Meynee / is felonous & damageous to the peple / by hardynesse of hey lordshipe / or by wey of offices / [439] for certes swiche lordes / sellen thanne hir lordship / to the deuel of helle / whan they sustenen / the wikkednesse of hire meynee / [440] or ellis / whan thise folk' of lowe degree / as thilke þat holden hostelries / sustenen the thefte of hire hostelers / & that is / in many manere of deceites / [441] thilke manere of folk ben the flyes / þat folwen the hony / or ellis the houndes / þat folwen the careyne / Swich forseide folk / stranglen spiritually hire lordshipes / [442] for which thus [1]seith dauid the prophete ¶ Wikked deth / mote come vp on thilke lordshipes / and god yeue / þat they mote descende in to helle adown / adown / for in hire houses / been Iniquitees & shrewednesses / and nat god of heuene / [443] and certes / but if they doon amendement / right so as god yaf his benysoñ to Pharao by the seruyce of Iacob / & to Laban by the seruyce of Ioseph / right so / god wol yeue his malisoñ to swiche lordshipes / as sustenen the wikkednesse of hire seruantz / but they

[*rat or mouse gnawings* ..be ..t ..... told ..... the Nor .....on .....est neuer ... reped a noure ..]rld of [*in a third hand*]

come to amendement' [444] pride of the table apeereþ eek' ful ofte / for certes' riche men ben clepid to festes / and pouere folk' ben put awey & rebuked / [445] ¶ Also in. exces / of diuerse metes & drynkes / and namely swiche manere bake metes & dissh̄metes brennynge of wilde fyr & peynted & castelled with papir / & semblable wast / so þat it is abusiõ for to thynke || [446] And eek' in to gret preciousnesse of vessel / & curiositee of Mynstralcie / by whiche / a man is stired the moore / to delices of luxure [447] ¶ If so be þat he sette his herte the lasse / vp on oure lord Ih̄u crist' certeyn it is a synne / & certeynly the delices / myghte ben so grete in the cas / þat man myghte lightly fallen by hem in to dedly synne / [448] ¶ The especes that sourdren of pride / soothly whan they sourden of malice ymagyned & auysed / & forncast' or ellis of vsage / ben dedly synnes / it is no doute / [449] and whan they sourde by freletee / vnauysed sodeynly / & sodeynly / withdrawe agayn / al be they greuouse synnes / I gesse / that they ne be nat dedly [450] ¶ Now myghte men axe / wher of þat pryde sourdeth & spryngeth / And I seye som tyme it spryngeth of the goodes of nature / and somtyme of the goodes of fortune / & som tyme / of the goodes of grace / [451] ¶ Certes the goodes of nature / stonden outher in goodes of body / or goodes of soule || [452] Certes / goodes of body / ben heele of body / strengthe / delyuernesse / beautee / genterie / franchise [453] ¶ goodes of nature of the soule ben good wit' sharpe vnderstondynge / subtil engyn / vertu naturel / good memorie [454] ¶ goodes of fortune / ben richesses / hey degrees of lordshipes / preisynges of the peple [455] ¶ goodes of grace / ben Science / power to suffre spiritual trauaille / benygnytee / vertuous contemplacioñ / withstondynge of temptacion ¶ and semblable thynges / [456] of whiche forseyde goodes / certes it is a ful gret folie a man to pryden hym in any of hem alle / [457]

[Pride] of the table.

[Exces]se of mete

And yf thou wyest what thyng yt were Coneng to lerne [*in a third hand*]

[Whe]r of cometh pryde.

[g]oodes of body

[good]es of the soule.

[good]es of fortune.

¶ Now as for to speke of goodes of nature / god woot þat som tyme we han hem in nature / as muche to oure damage / as to oure profit [458] ¶ As for to speke of heele of [1]body / certes it passeth ful lightly / & eek it is ful ofte encheson / of the siknesse of the soule / for god woot the flessh is a ful greet enemy to the soule / and therfore / the moore þat the body is hool / the moore be we in peril to falle || [459] Eke for to pryde hym in hys strengthe of body / it is an heigh folye / for certes / the flessh coueiteth agayn the spirit / & ay the moore strong þat the flessh is / the sorier may the soule be / [460] and ouer al this / Strengthe of body & worldly hardynesse / causeth ful ofte many man / to peril & meschance || [461] Eke / for to pryde hym of his genterye / is ful gret folie / for ofte tyme / the genterie of the body / bynymeth the genterie of the soule / & eek / we ben alle / of .o. fader & of o moder / & alle we ben of o nature roten / and corrupt bothe riche & pouere / [462] for sothe / o manere gentilrye / is for to preise / that apparayleth mannes corage with vertues / & moralitees / & maketh hym cristes child / [463] for truste wel / þat ouer what man þat synne hath maistrye / he is verray cherl to synne

[464] ¶ Now / ben ther general signes of gentilesse / as eschewynge of vice / or rybaudye & seruage of synne / in word / in werk / and contenance / [465] & vsynge vertu / curteisye / & clennesse / & to be liberal / that is to seyn / large by mesure / for thilke that passeth mesure / is folye & synne || [466] Another is / to remembre hym of bounte / þat he of oother folk hath receyued || [467] Another is / to ben benygne / to hise goode subgetz / wher fore as seith Senek ther is no thyng moore couenable to a man of heigh estat / than debonairetee & pitee / [468] and therfore thise flyes / þat men clepe bees / whan they maken hire kyng they chesen oon þat hath no prikke / wher with he may stynge || [469]

nota

Another is / a man to haue a noble herte & a diligent to attayne to hye vertuouse thynges [470* *see after* 474 *& Pet.* . . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
[471] Certes also / who þat prydeth hym in the goodes of fortune / he is a ful gret fool / for som tyme / is a man a gret lord by the morwe / þat is a kaytif & a wrecche / er it be nyght [472] and som tyme / the richesse of a man is cause of his deeth / somtyme the delices of a man / ben cause of the greuous maladie / thurgh which he dyeth ‖ [473] Certes / the commendacioñ of the peple / is som tyme ful fals 7 & ful brotil for to triste / this day they preise / to morwe they blame / [474] god woot desir to haue the commendacioñ eek of peple / hath caused deth / to many a bisy man [*470] ¶ Now certes a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace / is eek an outrageous folye / for thilke yiftes of grace / that sholde haue turned hym to goodnesse [1]and to medicine turneth hym to venym & to confusioñ / as seyth Seint Gregorie. [475] ¶ Now sith þat so is / þat ye han vnderstonde / what is pryde / & whiche ben the speces of it / & whennes pryde sourdeth & spryngeth ‖

[476] Now shul ye vnderstonde / which is the remedie agayns pride / and that is humylitee / or mekenesse / [477] that is a vertu / thurgh which / a man hath verray knoweleche of hym self / & holdeth of hym self/ no pris ne deyntee / as in regard of hise desertes / considerynge euere his freletee [478] ¶ Now ben ther .iij. maneres of humylitee / As humylitee in herte ¶ Another humylitee / is in Mouth ¶ the thridde in hise werkes [479] ¶ The humylitee in herte / is in .iiij. maneres ¶ that oon is / whan a man holdeth hym self as naught worth / biforn god of heuene ‖ Another is / whan he ne despiseth

[iij] maners of humilite

noon other man [480] ¶ the thridde is / whan he ne rekketh nat' thogh men holde hym noght worth || the ferthe is / whan he nys nat sory of his humyliacioñ [481] ¶ Also the humylitee of Mouth / is in .iiij. thynges ¶ In Atempree speche ¶ and in humblesse of speche || And whan he biknoweth *with* his owene Mouth / *þat* he is swich / as hym thynketh *þat* he is in his herte ¶ Another is whan he preiseth the bountee of another man / and nothyng ther of amenuseth [482] ¶ Humylitee eek in werk' is in .iiij. maneres || the firste / is whan he putteth othere men biforn hym ¶ the seconde is / to chese the loweste place ouer al || The thridde is / gladly to assente to good conseil || [483] the ferthe is / gladly to stonde to the award of his souereyn / or of hym / *þat* is hyer in degree / certeyn / this is a gret werk of humylitee

¶ Inuidia

[484] After pryde / wol I speke / of the foule synne of Enuye / which *þat* is / as by the word of the philosophre Sorwe of oother mannes *prosperitee* / and after the word of Seint Augustyn / it is sorwe of oother mennes wele / and ioye of oother mennes harm [485] ¶ This foule synne / is platly agayns the holy goost' al be it so *þat* euery synne / is agayn the holy goost' yet nathelees for as muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to holy goost' & enuye cometh proprely of malice / ther fore is proprely agayns the bountee of the holy goost' [486] ¶ Now hath malice .ij. speces / that is to seyn / hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse / or ellis the flessh of a man is so blynd [1] *þat* he considereth nat' *þat* he is in synne / or rekketh nat' *þat* he is in synne / which is / the hardnesse of the deuel [487] ¶ That other spece of Enuye / is whan *þat* a man werreyeth trouthe / whan he woot' *þat* it is trouthe / & eek' whan he werreyeth / the grace *þat* god hath yeue to his

neighebore / & al this / is by enuye / [488] Certes / thanne is enuye / the worste synne þat is / for soothly / alle othere synnes / ben som tyme / agayns o special vertu / [489] but certes / enuye is agayns alle vertues / & agayns alle goodnesses / for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebore / & in this manere / it is dyuers from alle othere synnes / [490] for wel vnnethe / is ther any synne / þat it ne hath / som delit in hym self / saue oonly enuye / þat euere hath in hym self / angwissh & sorwe [491] ¶ The speces of Enuye ben thise ¶ Ther is first sorwe of oother mennes goodnesse and of hire prosperitee / and prosperitee / is kyndely matere of Ioye / thanne is Enuye / a synne agayns kynde [492] ¶ The seconde spece of Enuye / is Ioye of oother mannes harm / and that is proprely lyk to the deuel that euere reioyseth hym of mannes harm [493] ¶ Of thise .ij. speces comth bakbitynge / and this synne of bakbitynge / or detraccion / hath certeyn speces / as thus ‖ Som man preiseth his neighebore / by a wikked entente / [494] for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende / alwey he maketh a .but. at the laste ende / þat is digne of moore blame / than worth is al the preisynge [495] ¶ The Seconde spece is / þat if a man be good / & dooth / or seith a thyng to good entente / the bakbitere wol turne al thilke goodnesse vp so down / to his shrewede entente [496] ¶ The thridde / is to amenuse / the bountee of his neighebore [497] ¶ The ferthe spece of bakbitynge / is this ‖ that if men speke goodnesse of a man / thanne wol the bakbitere seyn / par fey / swich a man / is yet bet than he in despreisynge / of hym þat men preise [498] ¶ The fifthe spece is / for to consente gladly / and herkne gladly / the harm þat men speke of oother folk / this synne is ful greet & ay encreseth / after the wikked entente of the bakbitere [499] ¶ After bakbitynge comth grucchynge or Murmuracioñ / and som tyme / it spryngeth of Inpacience agayns god / & som tyme agayns man

The speces of E[nuye].

Bakbitynge

Grucchynge.

[500] ¶ Agayns god is it' whan a man gruccheth agayn the pyne of helle / or agayns pouerte / or los of catel / or agayn reyn / or tempest' or ellis gruccheth / þat shrewes han *pro*sperite / or ellis / for þat goode men han aduersitee / [501] and alle thise thynges / sholde men suffre paciently / for they comen by the rightful Iugement' & ordinañce [1] of god [502] ¶ Som tyme / cometh grucchynge of Auarice / as Iudas grucched agayns the Magdeleyne / whan she enoynte the heued of oure lord Iħu crist' *with* hire *pre*cious oynement || [503] this manere of *mur*mure is swich as whan men grucchen of goodnesses þat hem selue doon or þat othere folk doon / of hire owene catel [504] ¶ Som tyme comth Murmure of pryde / as whan Symon the pharisee / grucched agayn the Magdeleyne / whan she approched to Iħu crist' & weepe at his feet' for hire synnes || [505] And som tyme / it sourdeth of Enuye / whan men discouer*en* a mannes harm þat was pryuee / or bereth hym on hand thyng þat is fals / [506] ¶ Murm*ur* eek is ofte amonges seruantz / þat grucchen / whan hire souereyns bidden hem to doon leueful thynges / [507] and for as muche as they dar nat openly *with* seye the comandementz of hire souereyns / yet wol they seyn harm & grucche & *mur*mure pryuely for *ver*ray despit/ [508] whyche wordes / men clepe the deueles pater noster / though so be / þat the deuel ne hadde neu*ere* pater noster/ but þat lewed folk / yeuen it swich a name [509] ¶ Som tyme it comth of Ire / or pryuee hate / þat norisseth rancour in herte / as afterward
[Bitt]ernesse. I shal declare [510] ¶ Thanne comth eek' bitternesse of herte / thurgh which bitternesse / euery good dede of his neighebore semeth to hym bitter/ and vnsauoury [511]
[Dis]corde. ¶ Thanne comth discord / þat vnbyndeth alle manere
[Sco]rnynge of frendshipe ¶ Thanne comth scornynge of [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] his neighebore al do he neuer so wel' [512] ¶ Thanne comth
[Ac]cusinge accusynge / as whan man seketh occasiõn to anoyen his

neighebore / which þat is lyk' the craft of the deuel / þat wayteth bothe nyght & day to accusen vs alle / [513] ¶ Thanne comth Malignitee / thurgh which a man anoyeth his neighebore pryuely if he may / [514] and if he þat ne may / algate / his wikked wil ne shal nat wante / as for to brennen his hous pryuely / or enpoysone / or sleen hise bestes & semblable thynges / [M]alignite.

[*The Remedy against Envy.* (*No break in MS.*)]

[515] ¶ Now wol I speken of the remedye agayns this foule synne of Enuye ¶ first' is the loue of god principal / and louynge of hym self / & of his neighebore / for soothly / that oon ne may nat ben *with* outhen that oother / [516] and truste wel / þat in the name of thy neighebore / thow shalt vnderstonde / the name of thy brother / for certes / alle we haue o fader flesshly & o moder / that is to seyn Adam and Eue / & eek o fader spirituel / that is god of heuene / [517] thy neighebore artow holden for to loue & wilne hym alle goodnesse / and ther fore seith god / loue thy neighebore as thy self / that is to seyn / to sauacion / bothe of lyf/ and soule / [518] & moore [1]ouer / thow shalt loue hym in word / & benygne amonestynge / & chastisynge / & conforte hym / in hise anoyes & preye for hym *with* al thyn herte ‖ [519] And in dede / thow shalt loue hym in swich wise / þat thow shalt doon to hym in charitee / as thow woldest' þat were doon to thyn owene *per*sone / [520] and therfore / thow ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked word / ne harm in his body / ne in his catel / ne in his soule by entisynge of wikked ensample [521] ¶ Thow shalt nat eek/ desiren his wyf' ne none of hyse thynges ¶ Vnderstoond eek' þat in the name of neighebore / is com-prehended his enemy / [522] *cer*tes man shal loue his enemy for the comandement of god / and soothly / thy freend shaltow loue in god ‖ [523] I seye / thyn enemy shaltow loue for goddes sake / by his comande- remedies for enuie.

ment' / for if it were reson̄ / þat man sholde hate his enemy / for sothe / god nolde nat' receyuen vs to his loue þat ben hise enemys / [524] ¶ Agayns .iij. manere of wronges þat his enemy dooth to hym / he shal doon .iij. thynges / as thus / [525] || Agayns hate & rancour of herte / he shal loue hym in herte / || Agayns chidynge & wikked wordes / he shal preye for his enemy || Agayns the wikked dede of his enemy / he shal doon hym bountee / [526] for crist seith / loueth youre enemys / & preieth for hem / þat speke yow harm / & eek for hem / þat yow chacen and pursuen / and dooth bountee / to hem þat yow haten ¶ Lo thus comandeth vs oure lord Iħu crist' to do to oure enemys / [527] for soothly / nature dryueth vs to louen oure frendes / & parfey oure enemys / han moore nede to loue / than oure frendes / & they þat moore nede haue / certes to hem shal men̄ dōn goodnesse / [528] and certes in thilke dede haue we remembrañce of the loue of Iħu crist' þat deyde for hise enemys / [529] and in as muche as thilke loue is the moore greuous to parfourne / so muche is the moore gret the merite / and therfore the louynge of of oure enemy / hath confounded the venym of the deuel / [530] for right / as the deuel is desconfited by humylitee / right so is he wownded to the deth / by the loue of oure enemy / [531] certes thanne is loue the medicyne þat chaceth out' the venym of enuye fro mannes herte [532] the speces of this pas shullen ben moore largely declared / in hire chapitres folwynge

¶ Ira

[533]

After Enuye / wol I discryuen the synne of Ire / for soothly / who so þat hath enuye vp on his neighebore [1]anon he wole communely fynde hym matere of wraththe / in word or in dede / agayns hym / to whom he hath enuye / [534] and as wel / comth Ire of pride /

as of enuye / for soothly / he þat is proud or enuyous / is lightly wroth

[535] ¶ This synne of Ire / after the discryuyng of Seint Augustyn / is wikked wil to ben auenged / by word / or by dede [536] ¶ Ire after the philosophre / is the feruent blood of man / yquyked in his herte / thurgh which / he wole harm / to hym þat he hateth / [537] for certes the herte of man / by eschawfynge & moeuynge of his blood / wexeth so trouble / þat he is out of alle Iugement of resoñ // [538] But ye shal vnderstonde / þat Ire is in two maneres || that oon of hem is good & that oother is wikke || [539] the goode Ire is / by Ialowsie of goodnesse / thurgh which / a man is wrooth with wikkednesse & agayns wikkednesse / and therfore seith a wys / that Ire is bet than pley || [540] this Ire is with debonairetee / & it is wroth with oute bitternesse / nat wroth agayns the man / but wroth / with the mysdede of the man / as seith the prophete Dauid ¶ Irascimini & nolite peccare [541] ¶ Now vnderstondeth / þat wikked Ire / is in .ij. maneres || that is to seyn / sodeyn Ire or hastif Ire with oute auysement & consentynge of his reson / [542] the Menyng & the sens of this is / þat the reson of a man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn Ire / and thanne is it venyal || [543] Another Ire / is ful wikked / þat comth of felonye of herte auysed / & cast bifore with wikked wil to do vengeañce / & ther to his resoñ consenteth / and soothly / this is dedly synne [544] ¶ this Ire / is so displesant to god / þat it troubleth his hous / & chaceth the holy goost out of mannes soule / and wasteth & destroyeth the liknesse of god / that is to seyn / the vertu / þat is in mannes soule / [545] & put in hym / the liknesse of the deuel / & bynymeth the man fro god / þat is his rightful lord || [546] this Ire / is a ful gret plesañce to the deuel / for it is the deueles forneys / þat is eschawfed with the fyr of helle / [547] for certes /

right so as fyr is moore myghty to destroye erthely thynges / than another Element: right so Ire is myghty / to destroye alle ˙spirituel thynges || [548] Looke / how þat fyr of smale gleedes / þat ben almoost dede vnder the Asshen wolen quyke agayn / whan they ben touched with brymston: right so / Ire wole euere mo quyke agayn / whan it is touched by the pryde þat is coue*r*ed in mannes herte / [549] for *cer*tes / fyr ne may nat come out of no thyng˙ but if it were first˙ in the same thyng naturelly˙ / as fyr is drawen out of flyntes with Steel / [550] and right so / as pryde is ofte tyme matere of Ire right so is rancour norice & kepere of Ire [551] ¶ Ther is a manere tree [1]as seith Seint ysidre[1] [2]that whan men maken fuyr of thilke tree / & cou*er*e the coles of it with asshen sóothly the fuyr of it wole lasten alle a yere or more / [552] And right so fareth it of rancour whan it is ones receyued in the hertes of so*mm*e men: certeyn it wole lasten p*ar*auenture. from oon Ester Day vnto ano*þer* Ester day & more / [553] But certes thilke man is ful fer fro the mercy of god alle thilke while //

[1—1] *Catchwords. The rest of the Hengwrt MS. is gone.*]

[2] Christ Church MS, *leaf* 262]

[554] In this forseide deuels forneys. ther forgen .iij. shrewys: Pride. that ay bloweth & encresith the fuyr by chidynge & wikked wordes // [555] Thanne stante enuye. and holdeth the hote Iren vpon the herte of man wit a peyre of longe tonges of longe rancour / [556] Thanne stant the synne of Contumelie. or strife & chest/ & batereth & forgith by . vileyns˙ repreuynges [557] Certes this˙ cursed synne anoyeth bothe to the man hym selfe. & eeke to his neighebore. For soothly almoste al the harme that a man doth to his neighebore cometh of wrath / [558] For certez outrageous wrath dooth al that eu*er* the deuel hym co*mm*aundeth / For he ne spareth neyther criste ne his ˙ moder / [559] And in his outragreo*us* anger and Ire. allas ful many oon at that tyme felith in his herte ful wikkedly

bothe of criste & eke his halewys. [560] Is nat thys a cursed vice? yis certes allas. It bynemeth from man his witte & his reson & alle his debonaire lyfe spirituel. that shulden kepe his soule // [561] Certes yt bynemeth eke goddis dewe lordeshipe / and that is mannes soule. and the loue of his neighebores // It stryueth eke alday agayn treuthe. It reueth hym the quiete of his herte. & subuerteth his soule //

[562] Of [I]re comen these stynkynge engendrures / Fir[s]te hate. that is oldee wrath / discorde thurgh whiche a man forsaketh his olde frendee full longe / [563] And thanne cometh werre & euery maner of wronge that man doth to his neighebore in body or in catel || [564] Of this cursedde synne of Ire cometh eke manslaughter / And vndirstonde wele *that* homycyde that is manslaughter. is in diuerse wise. Sommaner of homycyde is spirituel. & som is bodely. [565] Spirituel manslaughtre is [i]n .vj. thynges. First by hate. as seyth seint Iohn that he that hateth his brother is homycyde // [566] homycyde is eke by bakbytynge / of whiche bakbiteris seith Salomon / that they han .ij. swerdes with wiche they sleen hire neighbores. For sootly as wikke is. to by nyme hym his good name / as his lyfe // [567] homycide is eke. in yeuynge of wikked counseile [1]by fraude / or for to yeue counseile[1] / to arreyse wrongeful custumes & tailages. [568] of whiche seith seint [2]Salomon / leon rorynge & bere hungry ben lyke to the Cruel lordshipes in with holdynge or abreggynge of the shipe. or the hire. or of ye wages of seruauntes / or ellys in vsure. or in withdrawynge / of the Almesse of the pouere folke. [569] For whiche the wise man seith. Fedith hym. that almoost dieth for hunger / For sothly. but if thow fede hym. thow sleyst him // And alle these ben deedly synnes // [570] Bodely manslaughter is. whan thow sleyst hym with thy tunge // In other manere. as whan thow commaundest to slen a man or ellys yeuest hym counseile to slen a

[1—1] *repeated in MS.*

man // [571] Man slaughter in dede is in .iiij. maners / That oon is by lawe Right as a Iustice dampneth hym that is coupable to the deeth But late the Iustice be ware that he do it rightfully / And that he do it nat for delyte to spille blood / but for kepynge of rigtwysnesse // [572] A nother homycyde is doon for necessite. as whan a man sleith a nother in his defendaunt. & that he ne may noon other wise escape from his owne deeth / [573] But certeynly. if he may escape withoute slaughter of his aduersarie and sleeth hym he dooth synne & he shall bere penaunce as for deedly synne // [574] Eke if a man by caas or aventure shete an arwe or caste a stoon with whiche he sleith a man he is homycyde // [575] Eke if a woman by necligence ouerlyth hire childe in hire slepynge. it is homycyde & deedly synne // [576] Eke whan man destorbeth concepcion of a childe / & maketh a woman other barayne by drynkynge venemous drynkes. thurgh whiche she may nat. conceyue / Or sleeth a childe by drynkes or ellys putteth certeyn material thynges in hire secre places to slee the childe [577] or ellys doth vnkyndely synne. by whiche man or woman shedeth hir nature in manere or in place ther as a childe may nat be conceyued Or ellys if a woman hath nat conceyued / & hurte hire selfe & sleth the childe / yet is it homycyde // [578] what sey we eke of wymmen that mordren hire children for drede of wordely shame. Certes an horrible homycyde //. [579] homycyde is eke if a man approcheth to a woman be desire of lecherie thurgh whiche the childe is perisshed or ellys smyteth a woman wityngly thurgh whiche she leseth hire childe / Alle these ben homycydes. and horrible dedly synnes // [580] yet comen ther of Ire many mo synnes as wele in worde. as in thought And in dede / as he that arettith vpon god. or blameth god of thynge of whiche he is hym selfe gylty. or dispisith god. & alle hise halewis as doon these cursed hasardours

in dyuers cuntres / [581] This curside synne doon they whan they felen in hire herte / ful wikedly of god and hise halewes // [582] Also whan they treten. vnreuerently the sacrement of the holy auter thilke synne is so greet that vnnethe may it ben relessed. but that the mercy of god passeth alle his werkys it is so grete & he so benynge // [583] Than cometh of Ire attry answer / [1] whan a man is sharply a-monested in his shrifte / to forlete synnce [584] thanne wole he be Angry & answere hokrely / And angrely or deffende or excusen his synne by vn-stedefastnesse of fleisshe / or ellys he dide it for to holde companye with hise felawys / or ellys he seith the fende entyced hym / [585] or ellys he dyde it for his youthe. or ellys his complexioun. is so corageous that he may nat forbere / or ellys it ys his destyne as he seith / vnto a certeyn age or ellys he seith it comyth hym of gentilesse of his Auncestres. & semblable thynges [586] Alle these manere of folke so wrappen hem in hire synnes that they ne wole nat delyuere hem selfe / for soothly no wight that excuseth hem selfe wilfully of hys synne may nat be delyuered of his synne til that he mekely byknoweth his synne // [587] Aftir this than cometh sweryng that is expresse agayn the commaundement of god/ And this byfalleth ofte of Angir & of Ire / [588] God seith. thow shalt nat take the name of thy lordo god in veyn. or in ydel / Also oure lord criste seith by the worde of seint Mathewe Mathee 5te. **Nolite iurare omnino**. [589] Ne wolde ye nat swere in alle manere. neither by heuene? For it is goddis trone / Ne by erthe? For it is the benche of his feet? Ne by Ierusalem? for it is the Cite of a grete kynge. Ne be thyn heed? For thow maist nat make an here white ne blake. [590] But seyth by youre word ye ye? and nay nay. And what that is more it is of yuel. thus seyst crist/ [591] For cristes sake ne swerith nat so synfully in dismembrynge of Criste by soule /

herte / bones / & body / For certes it semeth / that cursed Iewis ne dismembred nat ynow the precious persone of criste. but ye dismembre hym more. [592] And if so be that the lawe compelle yow to swere: than rewle yow aftir the lawe of god in youre swerynge. as seith Jeromye .4to. c°. **Iurabis/ in uerita** *in* **iudicio & in iusticia.** Thow shalt kepe .iij. condicions. Thow shalt swere in trouthe In doom. and in rightwysnesse. [593] This is to seyn / Thow shalt swere soth / For euery lesynge is agayns criste/ For crist is verrey trouthe / And thynke wele thys. *that* euery grete swerer nat compelled lawefully to swere: the wounde shal nat departe /from his hous. while he vseth swiche vnlefull swerynge / [594] Thow shalt swere eke in doom. whan thow art constreyned by thy domesman to witnesse the treuthe || [595] Eke thow shalt nat swere for enuye / ne for fauour / ne for mede; but for rightwysnesse for declaracioun of it. to worshepe of god/ and helpynge of thyn euen cristen / [596] And therfore euery man that taketh goddis name en ydel / or falsly swereth for his mouth or ellys taketh on hym the name of *crist* to be called a cristen man / and lyuyth agayns cristes lyuynge & his techynge / alle they taken goddes name in ydel // [597] looke eke what seith seint Petir Actuum. 4to. **Non est aliud nomen sub celo.** Ther is noon other name seith seint Petir vnder heuen yeuen to men in whiche they mowe be saued. that is to seyn. but in the name of Ihesu criste / [598] Take kepe eeke. how that the precious name of criste as seith seint Poule Ad Philipenses .2. **In nomine ihesu** &c that in the name of ihesu [1] euery knee of heuenly creatures / or erthely / or of helle: sholde bowe / For it is so holy & so worshepfull that the cursed feend in helle sholde tremblen to here it nempned // [599] Than semeth it. that men that sweren so horribly / by hys

blessed name / that they despice it more boldely. than dide the cursed iewys / or ellys the Deuel that trembleth whañ he hereth his name //

[600] Now certis sith that swerynge. but if it be lawefully doon. is so hily deffended / myche worse is. for swerynge falsely & yet needles //

[601] what seye we eke of hem that Delyte hem in swerynge or holden it a gentire or a manly dede to swere grete othes // And what of hem that of verray vsage. ne cesse nat to swere grete oothes / al be the cause nat woorth a straugh̄ / certis this is horrible synne // [602] [. . . . . .*no gap in the MS.*] [603] But late vs goo now to thilke horrible swerynge of adiuracioun & coniuracioun / As doon these fals enchaunteour. or Nygromanciens in bacyns fulle of water. or in a bright swerde in a sercle or in a fuyr. or in the sholder boon of a sheepe / [604] I kan natte seyn / but that they doon cursedly & dampnably agayns criste and alle the feith of holy chirche //

[605] what sey we of hem. that by-leeuen on dyuynayles / as by flyght or by noyse of bryddes or of beestes / or by sort. // By geomancye / by dremes / by chirkynge of houses / by gnawynge of rattes. & whiche manere wrecchednesse [606] certes alle this thynke is defended by god & holichirche / For whiche they accursed til they come to amendement. that on swiche filthe setten here byleue // [607] Charmes for woundes or maladie of men / or of bestes / if they taken any effecte. it may be parauenture that god suffreth it. for folke sholde yeue the more feith & reuerence to his name //

[608] Now wole I speke of lesynges / whiche generally / is fals signifiaunce of worde in entente to desceyuen his euen cristene // [609] Som lesynge is of whiche there cometh noon auauntage to no wight And som lesynge turneth to ye ease or profite of a man / And to

damage of a nother man [610] // Another lesynge for to sauen his lyfe or his catel comyth of delyte for to lye / in whiche delyte they wille forge a longe tale & peynte it with alle circumstaunces. where alle the grounde of the tale is fals // [611] Som lesynge cometh for he wole sustene his worde Som lesynge cometh of rechelnesse / wit outen avisement and semblable thynges //

[612] late vs now touche the vice of Flatering whiche ne cometh nat gladly but for drede. or for couetise // [613] Flaterie is generally wrongfull preysynge // Flateries ben the deuels norices / that norissen hise children. with Melke of losengerie / [614] For sothe. Salomon seith. that flaterie is wors than detraccioun For somtyme detraccion maketh an hauteyn man be the More humble / for he dredeth detraccion // But certes flaterie that maketh a man to enhaunsen his herte & his countenaunce // [615] Flaterers ben the deuels enchauntours. For they make a man to wene of [1]hym selfe by lyke that he is nat lyke. / [616] They ben lyke Iudas that bytraised [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] a man to selle hym to his ennemye. that is the deuels // [617] Flaterers ben the deuels Chapeleyns that syngen euer placebo. [618] I rekene flaterers in the vices of Ire / for ofte tyme. if oo man be wrooth with a nother / than wole he flatere som wight to sustene hym in his quarelle //

[619] Speke we now of swiche cursynge / as comyth of Irous herte / Malysoun generally may be seyd euery maner power of harme swiche cursynge [2]byreueth man fro the reigne of god / As seith seint Poule // [620] And oftyme swiche cursynge[3] wrongfully retorneth agayn to hym that curseth. as a brid retorneth agayn to his owne neste / [621] and ouer alle thynges men ought to eschewe to cursen hire children / & yeuen to the deuel here engendrure / as ferforth as in hem is / certes it is grete perille & grete synne //

2—3 wrongly repeated in MS., after 3

[622] late vs thanne speke of chidynge & reproches whiche ben full grete woundes in mannes herte. For they vnsowen the semes of Frendeshippe in mannes herte. [623] For certes vnnethes may a man · ben accorded with hym that hath hym opynly reuyled & repryued. & desclaundred This is a full grymly · synne as criste seith in the gospel / [624] And take kepe now. that he that repreueth his neighebore / outher he repreueth hym by som harme of peyne that he hath on his body / as Mesel Croked harlote. or be som synne that he doth // [625] Now if he repreue hym by harme of peyne: than turneth the repref to Ihesu Criste for peyne is sente by the rightwis sonde of god / And by his suffraunce / be it Meselrie. or Mayme or Maladie // [626] And if he repreue hym · vncharitably of synne / as thowe dronkelowe harlot & so forth // thanne aperteyneth that to the reioysynge of the deuel / that euer hath ioy that men don synne / [627] And certes chidynge may nat come but out of a vyleyns herte. For after the habundaunce of the herte: speketh the mouth full ofte [628] And ye shulle vndirstonde / that loke by any way. whan any man shall chastice a nother. that he be ware. from chydynge or repreuynge For trewly but if he be ware: he may full lyghtly quyken the fuyr of angre & of wrath whiche that he sholde quenche & parauenture sleeth hym that he myght chastice with benygnyte [629] For as seith seint Salomon. The Amiable tunge is the tree of lyfe that is to seyn. of lyfe espirituel / and soothly a deslaue tunge sleeth the spirites of hym that repreueth / and eke of hym that is repreued / [630] lo what seyth seint Augustyn / ther is no thynge so lyke ye deuels childe. As he that ofte chideth. Seint Poule seith eeke I seruaunt of god / byhoueth nat to chide. [631] And how that chidynge be a veleyns thynge bytwixe alle maner folke. yet is it certes [1] moste vncouenable bitwixe a man & his wyfe. For ther is neuer reste.

And therfore seith Salomon / An hous that is vnkou*e*red. & droppynge / & a chidynge wyfe. ben lyke / [632] A man that is in a droppynge hous in many places. thow he eschewe the droppynge in oo place. it droppeth on hy*m* in a nother place // So fareth it by a chydynge wyfe. but she chide hym in oo place / she wole chide hym in a nother // [633] And therfore bettre is a morsel of brede *with* ioy^{e} than an housfull of delices with chidyngee seith Salomon // [634] Seynt Poule seith. o ye / women be ye subiettez to youre housbondes / as byhoueth in god. And ye men / loueth youre wyfes. Ad Colonisenses 3°. //

[635] Aftirwarde speke we of scornynge. whiche is a wikked synne. And namely whan he scorneth a man / for hise goode werkys / [636] For certes swiche scorneris farc*n* lyke the foule tode that may nat endure to smelle the swote sauour of the vyne wha*n* it floresseth. [637] These scorners ben p*ar*tynge felawes with the deuel For they han ioye. whan the deuel wynneth. & sorwe whan he leseth. [638] For they ben adu*er*saries of Ihesu criste. For they haten that he loueth that is to seyn sauacion of soule /

[639] Speke we now. of wikked counseille / For he that wikked counseille yeueth is a traitour For he deceyueth hym that trusteth in hym. Vt Achitofel ad Absolonem. But natheles. yet is his wikked counseille / furste agay*n*s hym selfe. [640] For as seith the wise man. eu*er*y fals lyuynge hathe his p*r*oprete in hym selfe that he that wole anoye another man he Anoieth firste hym selfe / [641] And men shulle vndirstonde that ma*n* shalle nat take his counseile of fals folke ne of Angry folke or greuous folke that louen specially to myche hire owne p*r*ofite ne to moche wordly folke / namely in counseillynge of soules //

[642] Now com^{t} the synne of hem that sowen & maken discorde amonges folke whiche is a synne that

crist hateth outrely // And no wonder ys for he deydo for to make concorde / [643] And more shame done they to criste than dide they that hym crucyfied/ For god loueth bettre that frendshepe be amonge folke than he dide hys owne body whiche that he yaf for vnyte. therfore ben they lykned to the deuel / that euer is aboute to make discorde //

[644] Now cometh thee synne of dowble tonge. swiche as speken faire byforn folke and wikkedly byhynde / or elles they maken semblaunt as thoughe they speke of good entencioun. or ellys in game & ploy & yette they speke of wikked entente //

[645] Now cometh bywreyng of counseille thurgh whiche a man is defamed/ certes vnneth may he restore the damage //

[646] Now comyth Manace that is an open foly./ For he that often manaceth he threteth more. than he may performe ful ofte tyme //

[647] Nowe cometh ydel wordes that is with oute profite of hym that speketh thoo wordes [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] Or elles ydel wordes ben thoo that ben neodeles or with outen entente of naturel profite [648] And alle be it that ydel wordes ben somtyme venial synne: yet sholde men doute hem. for we shulle yeue rekenynge of hem byfore god //

[649] Now cometh Ianglynge: that may nat ben with-oute [1]synne. And as seith Salomon. it is a signe of a-perte folye / [650] And therfore A Philosphre seyde whan men asked hym. how that men sholdee please the people / And he answerde / Doo many good werkys and spek fewe Iangles //

[651] After this cometh the synne of Iaperis. that ben the deuels Apes / For they make folke to laughen at hire Iaperie as men doon at the gaudes of an ape / Swiche iapes defendith seint Poul [652] loke how that vertuous wordes & holy conforten hem

that trauaillen in the seruyse of criste: so conforten the vileyns wordes & knakkys of Iaperis hem that trauaillen in the seruice of the deuel / [653] These ben the synnes that comen of the tonge. that comen of Ire & of other synnes moo

Remedium contra iram.

[654] The Remedie agayns Ire is a vertue that men clepen Mansuetude / that is debonairete And eke another vertue that men calleth pacience / or suffrance /

[655] debonairete withdrawith & refreyneth the sterynges & the meouynges of mannes corage in his herte in swiche manere/ that they ne skippe nat oute by angre ne by Ire. [656] Suffraunce suffrith swetely alle the Anoyaunces & the wronges that men doon to man outwarde [657] Seint Ierome seith thus of debonairete that it dooth noon harme to no wight ne seith ne for non harme that men doon ne seyn. he ne eschawfeth nat agayns his reson // [658] This vertue somtyme cometh of nature. /For as seith the Philosophre / A man is a quykke thynge by nature debonaire & tretable to goodnesse // But whan debonairete is enformed of grace than is it the more worth //

[659] Pacience that is a nother remedie agayns Ire is a vertue that suffereth swetely euery mannes godenesse / & nat wrooth for noon harme that is doon to hym // [660] The Philosophre seith that pacience is thilke vertue that suffreth debonairly alle the outrages of aduersite. & euery wikked worde // [661] This vertue maketh a man lyke to god & makyth hym his owne dere childe as seith criste / This vertue discomfiteth thyn enemy And therfore seith the wyseman / If thow wolte venquysshe thin enemy. lerne for to suffre / [662] And thow shalte vndirstonde that man suffreth .iiij. manere

of greuaunces & outward thinges/ agayns the whiche .iiij. he mote haue .iiij. maneres of pacience /

[663] The firste greuaunce is of wikked wordes. thilke suffred Ihesu criste with outen grucchynge full paciently whan the iewes despised hym & repreued hym full ofte / [664] Suffre thow therfore paciently / For the wise man seith. If thow stryue with a fool. though the fool be wrooth or thow he laugh / Algate thow shalte haue no reste [665] // That other greuaunce outwarde is to haue damage of thy catel / Ther agayns suffrid criste full paciently whan he was dispoilled of alle *that* he hadde in this lyfe / And that nas but of his clothes [666] // The thrid greuaunce is a man to haue harme in his body that suffred criste ful [1] paciently in alle his passion [667] // The ferthe greuaunce is in outrageous labour in werkys wherfore I sey that folke that maken hire seruauntez to trauaillen to greuously / or oute of tyme / as on halidaies: soothly they don grete synne // [668] here agayns suffred criste full paciently and taught vs pacience. whan he bare vppon his blyssed sholdre the croys / vpon whiche he shulde suffre dispitous deth // [669] here may men lerne to be pacient. For nat oonly cristen men ben pacient for loue of Ihesu criste & for gerdon of the blysfull lyfe that is pardurable // But certes the olde payens that neuer were cristene. commenden & vseden the vertue of pacience

[670] A Philosophre vpon a tyme that wolde haue beten his disciple for his grete trespas For whiche he was gretly amoeued. and broughte a yerde to scourge the childe / [671] And whan the childe saugh the yerde he seide to his maister [. . . . . .
. . *no gap in the MS.*] for thy correccioun. [672] For sothe quod the childe / ye oughte firste correcte youre selfe that han loste al youre pacience / for the gilte of a childe / [673] Forsoth quod the maister al wepynge: thow

seist sooth: haue thow the yerde my dere sone & correcte me for myn impacience // [674] Of pacience cometh obedience thurgh whiche a man is obedient to criste & to alle hem to whiche he ought ben obedient to criste // [675] And vndirstonde wele that obedience is *par*fite whan that a man dooth gladly & hastyly *with* good herte entierly. al that he sholde doo. [676] Obedience gene*r*ally is to *per*forme the doctrine of god & of his souereyn to whiche hym ougte to ben obeissaunt in alle rightwisnesse

De accidia./

[677] Aftyr the synne of Envye and Ire: now wole I speke of thee synne of Accidie. For Enuye blyndeth the herte of a man & Ire trobleth a man. And Accidie maketh hym heuy thoughtfull & wrawe. [678] Enuye & Ire maken bitternesse in herte / which bitternesse is moder of accidie / And bynemeth hym the loue of alle goodnesse / Thanne is accidie the Angwisshe of troubled herte. As seith seint Austyn seith / It is anoye of goodnesse. & anoye of harme [679] / Certes this is a dampnable synne / for it dooth wronge to ihesu criste in as moche as it bynemeth the seruyce that men oughte doon to ihesu criste with alle diligence. as seith Salomon //[680] But Accidie dooth no swiche diligence. he dooth all thynge with a noy, and with wrawnesse. And excusacioun. And with ydelnesse & vnluste / For whiche the book seith / A-cursed be he. that dooth the seruyce of god necligently [681] Thanne is Accidie enemy to euery estaat of man. For certes thestaat of man is in .iij. maners // [682] Outher it is thestaat of Innocence / as was thestaat of Adam byforn that he felle in-to synne / in whichee estaat he was holden too wirche / as in heringe / And Adowrynge of god // [683] Another estaat is thestaat of synfull men / in whiche estat men ben holden

to labour in preynge to god for amendement of hire synnes / & that he wole graunte hem to ryse oute of hire synnes [684] [1]A nother estaat is the estaat of grace. in whiche estaat he is holde to werkes of penytence / And certes to alle these thynges. is Accidie enemye & contrarie. For he loueth no besynesse at al // [685] Now certes this foule synne / Accie is eke a ful grete enemye to the lyflode of the body / For it ne hath noo purueaunce agayns temporel necessite For it forslewith & forsluggeth & destroieth alle goodes temporels by rechelesnesse //

[686] The .iiij. thynge is that Accidie is lyke hem / that ben in the peyne of helle. by cause of hir sleuthe / & of hire heuynesse / For they that ben dampned ben so bounde/ that thay may neyther wele doo ne thynke // [687] Of Accie cometh first that a man is anoyed & encombred for to do any goodnesse / & maketh that god hath abhomynacioun of swiche Accidye //

[688] Now cometh sleuth that wil nat suffre. non hardnesse ne no penaunce / For soothly slouthe ys so tendre & soo delicate. as seith Salomon / that he wole nat suffre noon hardnesse / ne penaunce / And therfore he shendeth al that he dooth [689] agayns this roten herted synne of Accidie & slouthe sholde men exercise hem selfe & vse hem selfe to doon good werkes / and manly & vertuously cacchen corage wele to doon thenkynge that oure lord Ihesu criste quyteth euery good dede / be it neuer so lite [690] vsage of labour. is a greet thynge. for it maketh as [s]eith Seint Bernarde the laborer to haue stronge armes & harde synwes / & slouthe makith hem feble & tendre // [691] Than cometh drede to begynne to werke any good werkes / for certes he that is enclyned to synne / hym thinketh it is so greet an Emprise for to vndirtake to doon werkes of goodnesse / [692] and casteth in his herte that the

circumstaunces of goodnesse ben so greuouse & so chargeaunt for to suffre / that he dar nat vndirtake to do werkes of goodnesse As seith seint Gregorie

[693] Now cometh wanhope that is despeire of the mercy of god that comyth somtyme of to moche outrageous sorwe / And somtyme of to moche drede ymagenynge that he hath do so myche synne. that it wole nat auaille hym though he wolde repente hym / & forsake synne / [694] thurgh whiche despaire or drede / he habawndoneth alle his herte to euery manersynne / As seith seint Augustyn / [695] whiche dampnable synne / if that it contynue vnto his ende / it is cleped synnyng in the holy goost // [696] This horrible synne is so perilous. that he that is despeired / ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to doo / As shewed wele be Judas / [697] certes a bouen alle synnes. than is this synne
[1 sic] moste displesaunt to criste & moste & moste [1] aduersarie [698] Sothely / he that despeireth hym. is lyke the cowarde Champion recreaunt that seith creant with oute nede / Allas allas. nedeles is he recreaunt & nedeles despeired / [699] Certes the mercy of god is euer redy to ye penytent And is. a-bouen alle his werkys. [700] Allas kan nat a man by-thynken hym on the gospel of seint luke .15. Where as criste seith / that as wele shalle ther be ioye in heuene vpon a synfull man *that* dooth penitence / than vpon. 90 & 19 rightfull men that [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] neden noo [2] penitence / [701] loke forther in the same gospel / the ioye & the feste of thee good man that hadde loste his sone / whan his sone with repentaunce was retourned to his fader [702] kan they nat remembre hem eke that as seith seynt luke .23. how that the theef / that was hanged by syde Ihesu criste seyde / lorde remembre of me. whan thow comest into thy reigne. [703] For sothe seyde criste I sey to the. to day shalt thow be with me in paradys / [704] Certes ther is noon so horrible synne of

man that it ne may in his lyfe be destroied by penitence. thurgh vertue of the passioun & of the deeth of crist [705] Allas what nedeth man thanne to ben despeired. sith that his mercy so redy is & large / axe & haue // [706] Thanne cometh sompnolense. that is sluggy slombrynge whiche maketh a man be heuy & dulle in body & in soule // & this synne cometh of sleuth / [707] And certes the tyme that by wey of reson men sholde nat slepe that is by the morwe / but if there were cause / resonable [708] for soothly the morwe tyde is moste conenable / a man to sey his preiers and for to thynke on god / & to honour god / & to yeuen almesse to the poore / that firste cometh in the name of criste / [709] loo what seith Salomon / who so wole by the morwe a-wake & seke me / he shalle fynde [710] Thanne cometh neclygence or rechele[s]nesse. that rekketh of no thynge /. and how that ignoraunce be moder of alle harme / certes necligence is the Norice / [711] Necligence ne doth noo force whan he shall doon a thynge whether he do it wele or baddely //

[712] Of the remedye of these twoo synnes as seith the wyse man that he that dredeth god / he spareth nat to doon that hym oughte doon. [713] & he that loueth god: he wole doon diligence to plese god to his werkis and a-bawndone hym selfe with alle his myght wele for to doon / [714] Than cometh Idelnesse that is the yate of alle harmes / An ydel man is lyke a place that hath no wallys the deuels may entre on euery syde / or sheet at hym ad diskouerte by temptacion on euery syde / [715] This ydelnesse is the Thurrok/ of alle wikked and vileyns. and of alle Iangles trufles / and of alle ordure / [716] Certes the heuen is yeuen to hem that wole labouren & nat to ydel folke / Eeke Dauid seith that they ne be nat in the labour of men ne they shulle nat be whipped with men that is to seyn in purgatorie /

[717] certes thanne semeth it they shulle be turmentyd with the del in helle. but if they doo penitence /

[718] Than cometh the synne that men clepe Tarditas / as whan a man is to laterede or tariynge er he wole turne to god / And certes that is a grete folye / he is lyke to hym that falleth in the diche / & wole nat aryse / [719] And this vice comyth of a fals hope / that he thynketh / that he shalle lyue longe / but *that* hope failleth ful ofte //

[720] Thanne cometh lacchesse / that is he / that whan he begynneth any good werke anoon he shalle forlete it and stynte as doon they that han any wight to gouerne / and ne taken of hym no more kepe / Anoon as they fynden any contrarie / or any anoye // [721] These ben the newe shepehurdes that leten hire shipe wytyngly to renne to the wolfe that is in the breris / or do no force of hire owne gouer-naunce / [722] Of this cometh pouerte / and destruccion bothe of spirituelle & temporelle thynges / Thanne cometh a maner cooldnesse that freseith alle the herte of man // [723] Than comyth vndeuocion thurgh whiche a man is blente As seith seint Bernard / & hath swiche langour in soule that he may neither rede ne synge in holy chirche. ne here ne thynke of noo deuocion ne trauaille with his handes in noo good werke that it nys to hym vnsauory / And alle appalled / [724] thanne waxeth he slow & slombry / And so is enclyned to hate & to Enuye // [725] thanne comyth the synne of wordly sorwe. swiche as is cleped *Tristicia*. that sleeth man as seith seint Poule / [726] For certes swiche sorwe wercheth to the deeth of the soule / and of the body also / For ther of cometh / that a man is anoyed of his owne lyfe / [727] wherfore swiche sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lyfe of a man er that his tyme by come by wey of kynde

Remedium contra peccatum accidie

[728] Agayns this horrible synne of Accidie & the braunches of the same that is a vertue that is called Fortitudo. or strenght that is an affeccion thurgh whiche aman despiseth a noyous thynge // [729] This vertue is so myghty and so vigorous / that it dar withstonde myghtely & wisely kepe hym from periles that ben wikked / and wrastle agayns the assawtes of the deuel / [730] for it enhaunceth & enforceth the soule right as Accidie a-batith it and maketh it feble / For this Fortitudo may long endure by longe suffraunce. the trauailles that ben couenable //

[731] This vertue hath many spices // The firste is cleped magnanymite / that is to seyn grete corage [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] agayns Accidie / leste that it ne swolwe the soule / by the synne of sorwe. or destroye it by wanhope / [732] This vertue maketh folke vndirtake harde thynges & greuouse thynges by hire owne wille. wisely and resonabely / [733] And for as mychel as the deuel fyȝtteth agayns a man more by queyntyse and by sleight than by streght: therfore men shalle withstande hym by witte & by reson & by discrecion [734] Thanne Arn there the vertues of Feith & hope in god: and in his seintȝ to acheue & complice the good werkys whiche he purposeth fermely to contynue // [735] Thanne cometh seuerte or sikernesse & that is whan a man ne douteth no trauaille in tyme comynge of the good werkes that a man hath bygonne // [736] Than cometh magnificence / that is to seyn whan a man dooth & perfourmeth grete werkes of goodnesse And that is the ende why that men sholde doo gode werkys / For in the Accomplysynge of grete gode werkys. lyth the grete gerdoun [737] Thanne is there Constaunce that is stablenesse of corage / And this sholde ben in herte by stedeuast feith / And in mouth / and in

berynge & in chere / & in dede / [738] Eke ther ben more special remedies agayns Accidie in dyuers werkys. And in consideracions of the peynes of helle and of the ioyes of heuene / And in the truste of the grace of the holy goost that wole yeue hym myght to performe ys good entente.

De Auaricia

[739] ftyr Accidie wole I speke of Auarice / & of coueitise / of whiche synne / seith seint Poule / that the rote of alle harmes ys couetise / Ad Thimoth.6to. [740] For soothly whan the herte of man is confounded in it selfe & trowble / and that the soule hath loste the comfort of god than seketh he an ydel solace of wordly thynges

[741] // Auarice aftir the descripcioun / of seint Augustyn is lykerous in herte to haue erthely thynges / [742] som other folke seyn that auarice is for to purchace many erthely thynges. & no thynge yeue to hem that han nede // [743] And vndirstonde that Auarice ne stant nat in londe ne catel. but somtyme in science & in glorie. & in euery maner outrageous thynge. is Auarice & couetise / [744] And the difference bitwix Auarice & couetise is this / Couetise is this / Couetise is for to coueit swiche thynges as thow haste nat / And Auarice is for to with-holde & to kepe swiche thynges as thow haste with oute rightful nede / [745] Soothly this Auarice is a synne that is full dampnable / For alle holy writte curseth it / And speketh agayns that vice. For it dooth wronge to Ihesu criste / [746] For it byreueth hym the loue that men to hym owen. & turneth yt bakwarde agayns alle reson. [747] and makith that the Auaricious man hath more hope in his catel. than in Ihesu criste. and doeth more obseruaunce & kepynge of his tresore than he doth to the seruyse of Ihesu criste / [748] And therfore seith

seint Poul Ad Ephesios .5to. that an auaricious man is the thraldom of ydolatrie

[749] What difference is bitwixe an ydolastre / and an auaricious man / but that an ydolastre *par*auenture ne hath but oo mawment or twoo And the Auaricious man hath manye / For certes eu*ery* Floryn in his Coffre / is hys Mawment / [750] And certes the synne of Mawmient*rie* is the firste thynge / that god deffended in the ten co*m*maund-eme*n*t as berith witnesse in Exodi c^o^. 20. [751] Thow shalte haue no fals goddis bifore me / ne thow shalte make to the noo graue thynge Thus is an Auaricious man that loueth his tresore byforn god and ydolastre [752] thurgh his cursed synne of Auarice // Of Couetise comen his harde lordshipes. thurgh whiche men ben destreyned by taylages / customes & cariages moore than hire duete or resonn is / And eke take they of hire bonde men Am*er*cymentz whiche myghte moore rightfully ben cleped extorcions than M*er*cymentz [753] Of whiche m*er*cymentz and raunsonynge of bonde men / so*m*me lordes stywardes. seye*n* that it is rightfull / for as myche as a cherle hath no temporel thynge that it ne is his lordes as they seyn // [754] But certes these bysshops don wronge that byreuen hire bonde folke thynges that they neu*er* yaf hem Aug*ustinus* de ci*vitate* li*bro* .9°. // [755] Sooth is that the condicion of thraldom. & the firste cause of thraldom is for synne Genes*is* .9°.

[756] thus may yee sen that the gilte disserued thraldom / but nat nature / [757] wherfore these lordes ne sholde nat myche glorifie hem in hire lordeships sith that be natu*r*el condicion they ben nat lordes ou*er* thralles / but that thraldome comyth firste by the diserte of synne // [758] And forther ou*er* / ther as the lawe seith that temporel godes of bonde folke ben the goodes of hire lordshipes / ye that is for to vndirstonde the godes of the Emp*er*our / to deffenden hem in here right. but nat for to robben hem ne reuen hem / [759] And therfore

seith Seneca / Thy prudence shulde lyue benignely with thy thralles [760] [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] ben goddes peple / For humble folke / ben cristes freendes. they ben contubernial with the lorde //

[761] Thenke eke that of swiche seed [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] springen lordes / as wele may the cherle be saued as the lorde / [762] [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] wherfore I rede do right so with thy cherle. as thow woldest that thy lorde dide with thee / if thow were in his plyght // [763] Euery synfull man is a cherle to synne / I rede thee certes that thow lorde werke in swiche wise with thy cherles. that they rather loue the than drede // [764] I woot wele ther is degre a-boue degree. as reson is and skille is that men do hyre deuoire ther as it is dewe / But certes extorcions & despite of youre vnderlynges is dampnable //

[765] And forthier ouer vnderstonde wele that conquerours or tirauntz maken ful ofte thralles of hem that ben borne of as roial blood as ben they that hem conqueren / [766] This name of Cherldom was neuer erste kouthe til that Noe seide that his sone Canaan sholde be thralle to hise bretheren for his synne // [767] What seye we thanne of hem thatte pilen & doon extorcions to holy chirche / Certes the swerde thatte men yeuen firste to a knyght. whanne he is newe dubbed signifieth that he sholde deffende holy chirche / and nat robbe it ne pile it And whoo so dooth is traitour to criste / [768] And as seith seint Augustyn. they ben the deuels wolues that stra[n]glen the sheepe of ihesu criste. And doon worse than wolues / [769] For soothly whanne thee wolfe hath full his wombe. he stynteth to strangle his sheepe But soothly the pilours and destroiours of holy chirches godes. ne doo nat soo. For they ne stynte neuer to pille haue they neuer so myche [770] Now as I haue seide. sithr so is that synne was firste cause of thraldom

than is it thus that thilke tyme. that alle this world was in synne? than was al this world thraldom & subiecciou) [771] but certes sith the tyme of grace cam / god ordeyned / that som folke sholde be more highe in estaat & in degree. and some folke more lowh / and that euericho sholde be serued in estaat [. . *no gap in the MS.*] [772] And therfore in som cuntres ther they bien thralles whan they han tur[1]ned hem to the feyth? they make hire thralles free oute of thraldom / And therfore certes the lorde oweth to his man? that the man that the man oweth to his lorde / [773] The pope calleth hym selfe seruaunt of the seruauntez of god? but for as moche as the estate of holy chirche ne myghte nat han be / ne the comune profite myght nat han be kepte ne pees & reste in erthe but if god hadde ordeyned that som man had hier degree & som men lower. [774] therfore was souereynete ordeyned to kepe & mayntene. and deffende hire vnderlynges or hire subgetz in reson / as forforth as lieth in here power / And nat to destroy hem / ne confounde / [775] Wherfore I seye of thilke lordes. that ben like wolues that deuouren the possessions or the catel of pouere folke wrongfully. with outen mercy or mesure? [776] they shulle receyuen by the same mesure that they han mesured to pouere folke the mercy of Ihesu criste but if it be amended // [777] Now comyth deceite betwix Merchaunt & Merchaunt. And thow shalte vndirstonde / that merchaundise is in many maners / that oon is bodely / and that other is gostely // That oon is honeste & leuefull & that other deshoneste & vnleuefull // [778] Of thilke bodely merchaundise that is leuefull and honeste is this / that there as god hath ordeyned that a regne / or a cuntre is suffisaunt to hym selfe? than is it honeste & leuefull / that of habundaunce of this cuntre that men helpe another cuntre that is more nedy // [779] And therfore ther mote ben Merchauntz to brynge fro that oo cuntre to that other hire Merch-

aundisez // [780] That other Merchaundise that men haunte with fraude or trecherie & deceite with lesynges & fals oothes. is cursed & dampnable // [781] 'Espirituel Merchaundise is proprely Symonye that is ententyfe desire to bye thynge espirituel / that is thynge that aperteneth to the seintuarie of god & to cure of the soule / [782] This desire if so be that a man doo his diligence to performe it / al be it that his desire ne take noon effecte yet is it to hym a deedly synne / and if he be ordred. he is irreguler // [783] Certes Symonye is cleped of Symond Magus that wolde han boughte for temporel catel the yefte that god hadde yeuen by the holy goost to seint Peter and to the Apostles. [784] And therfore vndirstonde. that bothe he *that* selleth. & he that bieth thynges espirituels. ben cleped Symony als / be it by catel. be it be procurynge or be fleisshly preiere of hise frendis / or espirituel frendes / [785] Fleisly in two maners as by kyn-rede. or other frendes / Sothly if they praye for hym that is nat worthy and able / it is symonye. if he take the benefice / & if he be worthy and able: ther nys noon // [786] That other maner is. whan man or woman praien for folke to auauncen hem oonly. For wikke fleisshly affeccioun [1] that they han vnto the persones / And that is foule Symonye / [787] but certez in seruyse for whiche men yeuen thyng espirituel. vnto hire seruauntz. it mote ben vndi[r]stande / that the seruise mote be honeste & ellys / nat / And eke that it be with oute bargaynynge / and that the persone be able / [788] For as seith seint Damasye / alle the synnes of the worlde at regarde of this synne / arn as a thynge of naught for it is ye gretteste synne that may be. after the synne of lucyfer & of Antecriste [789] for by this synne god forleseth the chirche & the soule *that* he bought with his precious blood by hem that yeuen chirches to hem that ben nat digne / [790] For they putten. In thevys that

stelen the soules of ihesu criste & destroien his patrimoygne [791] by swiche vndigne prestes & curatz halewed men han the lesse reuerence of the sacrementz of holy chirche & swiche yeueris of chirches putten oute the children of criste and putten into the chirche the deuels owne sone / [792] they sillen the soules that lambes shulde kepen to the wolfe that strangleth hem // And therfore shulle they neuer han parte of the pasture of lambes that is the blysse of heuene // [793] Now comyth hasardrie with hise apurtenaunces. as tables. Rafles. of which deceite fals oothes / chidynges / and alle rauynes / blasphemynge & reneiynge of god / and hate of his neighebores / waaste of goodes / mysdespendynge of tyme / & somtym) manslaughtre // [794] Certes hasardours ne mowe nat ben with outen grete synne // [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] [795] Of Auarice / comen eke lesynges / thefte & fals witnesse and fals oothes / And ye shulle vndirstonde that these ben grete synne. & expresse agayn the commaundementz of god as I haue seyd [796] Fals witnesse is in wordo & eke in dede. In wordes as for to bireue thy neighebores good name by thy fals witnessynge or birefe hym his catel or his heritage by fals witnesseng whan thowe for ire or for mede. or for enuye birefte fals witnesse / or accusest hym or excusest hym by thy fals witnesse / or ellys excusest thy self falsly / [797] Ware yow questemongers and Notaries. Certes thurghe fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful grete sorwe and peyne. & many a nother moo // [798] The synne of thefte is eke expresse agayns goddis heste. & that in two maners / corporel or spirituel [799] [Corporel] as for to take thy neighebores catel agayns his wille / by it by force / or by sleighte / be it by mete or by mesure [800] by stelynge eke of fals enditementz vpon hym. & in borwynge of thy neighebores catel / in entente neuer to paie. & semblable thynges // [801] Espirituel thefte is sacrilege that is to seyn hurt-

ynge of holy thynges or of thynges sacred to criste in twoo maneris by reson of the holy place. as chirches or chirchehawes. [802] For whiche euery vyleyns synne that men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege or euery violence in the semblable places // Also they that withdrawe falsly the rightes that longen to holy chirche [803] & pleinly & generally sacrilege is to reue holy thynge fro holy place / or vnholy thynge oute of holy [1]place / or holy thynge oute of vnholy place

Remedium contra peccatum auaricie

[804]

NOw shulle ye vndirstonde / that the releuynge of Auarice / is misericorde & pite largely taken / And men myght axe why that misericorde & pite is releuynge of auarice // [805] Certes the Auaricious man sheweth no pite ne misericorde to the nedefull man. For he deliteth hym in kepynge of hise tresore. and nat in the rescowynge ne releuynge of hys· euene cristene / And therfore speke I firste of Misericorde // [806] Thanne is misericorde as seith the Philosophre a vertue. by whiche the corage of a man is sterid by the myséise of hym that is myseised / [807] vpon whiche Misericorde folwith pite in perfourmynge of charitable werkys of Misericorde / [808] And certes thise moeuen man to the Misericorde of ihesu criste that yaf hym self for oure gilte & suffred deeth for Misericorde. & forgaf vs original synnes / [809] and therby relessed vs fro the peyne of helle. & amenused thee peyne of purgetorie. by penitence / And yeueth grace wele to doo and at the laste. the ioy of heuene // [810] The spices of Misericorde ben as for to lene. & for to yeue. & eke for to yeue & relesse. & for to han pite in herte. & compassion of the myschefe of his

euene *cri*stene / and eke chastise ther as nede is // [811] A nother maner of remedie agay*ns* Auarice is resonable largesse / But soothly here byhoueth the consyderacion of the grace of ih*es*u criste. and of his temporel goodes eke & of the goodes *per*durables that criste yaf vs / [812] & eke to han remembraunce of the deeth that he shal receyue. he noot whanne. & eke that he shal forgoon al that he hath. saue oonly that he hath despended in good werkys //

[813] But for as myche as som folke ben vn Mesurable. men oughte eschewe fool largesse that men clepen waaste // [814] Certes he *that* is fool large. ne yeueth nat his catel but he leseth his catel / Soothly what thynge that he yeueth for veyn glorie / as to Mynstrals / & to folke for to beren his renoun in the worlde / he hath synne & noon) almesse / [815] certes he leseth firste hys godes. that ne seketh with the yefte of his good / nothynge but synne / [816] he is lyke to an hors that seketh rather to drynke drouy or trowble water than for to drynkee water of the clere welle / [817] And for as myche as they yeuen. there as they shulde nat yeuen. to hem ap*er*teyneth thilke malison that criste shall yeue at the day of dome to hem that shullen be da*m*pned

.De .Gula./

[818] After Auarice comyth Glotonye. whiche is expresse eke a-geyn the co*m*maundement of god // Glotonye is vnmesurable appetyte to ete or to drynke. or ellys to doon y-now to the vnmesurable appetyt & desordeyne couetise to ete or to drynke / [819] This synne [1]This synne corrumped al this world / as is wele shewed in the synne of Adam & of Eue. loo eke what seith seint Poule of glotonye / [820] Many seith seint Poule goon / of whiche **Gula**

I haue efte seyde to yow / And now I seye it wepynge / that ben the enemys of the croys of criste / of whiche the ende is deeth / and of whiche hire wombe is hire god. and hir glorie / & in confusion of hem / that so deuouren erthely thynges / [821] he that is vs*a*unt to this synne of glotonye: he ne may no synne withstonde / he mote ben in seruage of alle vices / for it is the deueles horde / ther he rideth hym & resteth / [822] this synne hath many spices // The firste is dron*k*enesse that is the horrible sepulcre of mannes reson / And therfore whan a man is drunken. he hath loste his reson. and this is deedly synne / [823] But soothly whan that a man is nat wonte to stronge drynke. & per*a*uenture ne knoweth nat the strenghthe of the drynke or hath feblesse in his heed or hath trauailled / thurgh whiche he drynketh the more. al be he sode*n*ly caught with drynke.. it is no deedly synne / but venial // [824] The secounde spice of glotonye is: that the spirite of a man wexeth alle troble for dron*k*enesse bireueth hym the discrecioun of his witte // [825] The thridde spice of glotonye is. whan a man devowreth his mete. & hath no rightfull man*er* of etyn*g*e [826] The fefthe is. whanne thurgh the grete habun-d*a*unce of his mete / the humours in his body ben destempered // [827] The fifte is. foryetilnesse be to mychel drynkynge. for whiche somtyme a man forgeteth er the morwe // what he dyde at euen or on the nyght byfore //

[828] In other maner ben distynte the spices of Glotonye aftir seint Gregorie // The firste is for to ete biforen tyme to ete // The secounde is whan a man gete hym no delicate mete or drynke // [829] The thridde is. whan men taken to myche ou*er* mesure // The fourthe is Curiosite / with grete entente to make & apparaillen his mete // The fifte is for to ete to gredely // [830] These ben the v. fyngers of the deuels hande / by whiche he drawith folke to synne

¶ Remedium contra peccatum gule

[831] Agayns glotonye is the remedie. Abstynence as seith Galien. but that holde I nat meritorie. if he do it oonly for hele of the body / Seint Augustyn wole that Abstinence doon for vertue & with pacience / [832] Abstynence he seith. is litelle woorth. but if a man haue good wille therto / and but it be enforced by pacience & by charite & that men doon it for goddis sake & in hope to haue the blysse of heuene //

[833] The felawes of Abstinence. / ben attemperaunce that holdeth the mene in alle thynges / Eke shame that escheweth alle deshoneste / Suffisaunce that siketh no riche metes ne drynkes ne dooth no fors of to outrageous apparaillynge of metis / [834] Mesure also that restreyneth by reson the deslauee appetit of etynge / Sobrenesse also that restreyneth the outrage of drynke / [835] Sparynge also that restreineth the delicate ease to sitte longe at his mete. and softely / wher fore somme folke stonden at hire owne wille to eten atte lasse leyser

[1].De luxuria./

[836] After Glotonye. thanne cometh leccherie / For these two synnes ben so nygh Cosyns that ofte tyme they wole nat departe / [837] God wote this synne is ful displesaunt to god / for he seide hym selfe. doo no leccherie / And therfore he putte grete peynes agayns thys synne in the olde testament. [838] If woman thralle. were taken in this synne. she sholde be beten with staues to the deth / And if shee were a gentilwoman. she sholde be slayn with stones / And if she were a bisshopes doughter. she sholde be brente by goddes commaundement // [839] Forther ouer by the synne of leccherie god dreinte alle the worlde. at the

diluge / And aftir that he brente .v. Cites *with* thonder lyght. & sonke hem into helle //

[840] Now late vs speke thanne of thylke stynkynge synne of leccherie that men clepe avoutrie of weddide folke that is to seyn. if that oon of hem be weddyd. or ellys bothe [841] Seint Iohn seyth / that auowtiers shullen ben in helle in a stanke brennynge of fuyr & of brymstoon [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] for the stynke of hire ordure // [842] Certes the brekynge of thys sacrement. is an horrible thynge. It was maked of god hym selfe in paradys. and confermed by Ihesu criste as witnesseth seint Mathew in the gospel. 19. A man shal lete Fad*er* & Moder & takyn hym to his wyfe. & they shuln ben twoo in oo fleissh [843] This sacrament betokeneth the knyttynge to-gidre of criste & of holy chirche. [844] And nat oonly that god forbade avoutrie in dede. but eke he co*m*maunded / that thow sholdest nat coueite thy neighebores wyfe [845] In this heste seith seint Augustyn. is forboden alle man*er*e couetise to doon lecherie / loo what seith seint Mathewe .v°. in the gospel / that who seeth a woman to couetise of hys luste he hath doon lecherie with hire in his herte. [846] here may ye sen / that nat oonly the de dede of *this* synne is forboden / but eke the desire to doon that synne // [847] Thys cursed synne anoieth greuously hem that it haunten And firste to hire soule / For he obligeth it to synne & to peyne of deth that is p*er*durable / [848] vnto the body anoieth it greuously also / For it drieth hy*m* & wasteth / and shente hym / and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the fende of helle / It wasteth eke his catel / and his substaunce. [849] and certes yef it be a foule thynge a man to wasten his catel on wo*m*men: yet is it a fouller thynge whan that for swiche ordure wo*m*men despenden vpon men hire catel & substaunce // [850] Thys synne as seith the p*ro*phete byreueth man & woman hire good fame & alle hire hono*ur*. And it is full plesaunt to the deuel / For therby

wynneth he the moste partie of this worlde / [851] And right as a Merchaunt deliteth hym moste in chafare that he hath moost auauntage of/ right so deliteth the fende in this ordure /

[852] This is that other [hond] of the deuel with .v. fyngers to cacche the peple to this vileynye // [853] The firste fynger is the fool lokynge of the fool womman. and of the fool man that sleeth right as the basilicok/ sleth folke / by the venym of hys [1]syght for the couetise of the eyen / folwen the couetyse of the herte // [854] The secound fynger is the. vyleyns touchynge in wicked manere / And therfore seith seint Salomon. that who so toucheth and handleth a woman he fareth lyke hym that handleth the Scorpion that stynγeth & sodeinly sleeth thurgh his enuenemynge / as who so touchith warme piche. hit shent hise fingres // [855] The thridde is fool wordes. that farith lyke fuyr that right anoon brenneth the herte // [856] The ferthe fynger. is the kyssynge / And trewely he were a greet fool that wolde kysse the Mouth of a brennynge Ouene. or of a Forneis [857] And more fooles ben they that kyssen in vileynye / For that Mouth is the Mouthe of helle / And namely this olde Dotardes holors yet wole they kysse! thogh they may nat doo. & smatre hem / [858] Certes they ben lyke to houndes / For an hounde whan he cometh by the roser or by other beautes. thogh he may nat pisse / yet wole he heue up his legge and make kontenaunce to pisse / [859] And for that many man weneth that he may nat synne for no lykerousnesse that he doth with his wyfe certes that opynyon is fals / god woot a man may slen hym selfe with his owne knyfe / & make hym. selfe dronke of his owne tonne / [860] Certis be it wyfe or childe. or any wordly thynge that he loueth byforn god / it is his mawment. & he is an ydolastre / [861] A man sholde louen his wyfe by discrecion / paciently and attemprely. and thanne is she as it were

hys syster // [862] The fyfthe fyfthe fynger of the deuels hand / is the stynkynge dede of lecchery [863] Certes the .v. fyngres of glotonye the fende putte in the wombe of a man. & with his .v. fyngers of lecherie he gripeth hym by the reynes for to throwe hym into the forneys of helle / [864] ther as they shalle han the fuyr and the wormes that euer shulle lasten and wepynge & waylyng/ sharpe hunger & thurste / grymlynesse of the deueles that shullen alle to treden hem withoute respyte. and with outen ende // [865] Of lecherie as I seyde sourden dyuerse spices. As fornicacion. that is bitwixe man & woman that ben nat maryed/ and this is deedly and agayns nature / [866] al that is enemy and destruccioun to nature. is agayns nature / [867] Parfay the reson of a man telleth hym eke wele that it is deedly synne / For as myche as [go]d forbade lecherie / And seint Poule yeueth hem the regne / *that* [*MS. torn*] dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedly synne [868] [*MS. torn*] her synne of lecherie of is for to bireue a maiden. of hire may[denh]ode // For he that soo dooth: certes he casteth a maiden out [*MS. torn*]e hiest degree. that is in this present lyfe [869] & bireueth hire thil[ke preci]ous fruyt that the book clepith the hundrid fruyt I ne kan [nat seye] it noon other weyes in englysshe. but in latyn it hight Cen[tesim]*us* fructus / [870] Certes he that so dooth. is cause of many damages [and vile]ynyes. moo than any man kan rekene / Right as he somtyme is cause of alle the damages that beestes don in the felde. that brekyth [1]the hegge or the closure / thurgh whiche he destroieth that may nat ben restored / [871] For certes no more may maydenhede be restored thanne an arme that is smyten fro the body may retorne a-gayn to wexe / [872] she may haue mercy. thys woot I wele if shee do penitence / but neuer shal it be. that she nas corrupt. [873] And alle be it so that I haue spoke somwhat of avoutrie. it is good to shewe hoo perils that longen to avoutrye for to eschewe that foule

synne / [874] Auowtrye in latyn is for to seyne aprochynge of oother mannes bedde thorgh thoo that whilom were o fleyssh abawdone hir bodyes to othere persones [875] Of this synne as seyth the wise man folwen many harmes / First brekynge of feyth And certes in feith is the keye of Cristendome / [876] And whan that fey[th] is broke & lorne. soothly Cristendome stant veyne & with outen fruyt [877] This synne is eke a thefte / For thefte generally to speke is for to reue a wight his thynge agayns his wille / [878] Certis this is the fouleste thefte that may be whan a woman stelyth hire body from hire housbande. & yeueth it to hire holour to defoule hire. & stelyth hire soule fro criste and yeueth it to the deuel / [879] this is a fouler thefte. than for to breke a chirche & stele the Chalice // For these avoutiers breken te temple of god spirituelly. & stelen the vessel of grace that is ye body & the soule. For whiche criste shal destroien hem as seyth seint Poule. [880] Soothly of this thefte. douted gretly Ioseph. whan *that* hys lordes wyfe preyed hym of vylenye whan he seyde / loo my lady how my lorde hath take to me vnder my warde / al that he hath in this worlde. ne no thynge of of hise thynges is oute of my power but oonly ye that ben his wyfe / [881] And how sholde I thanne do *this* wikkednesse & synne so horribly agayns god / and agayns my lorde god it forbede / Allas alto lyte ys swiche treuth now yfounde // [882] The thridde harm is the filthe. thurgh whiche they breken the commaundement of god. and defoulen the Auctour of hire Matrimony that is criste. [883] For certes in so myche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble & so digne so myche it is grete synne for to breke yt For god makyd mariage in Paradys in the staat of Innocence to multiplie mankynde to the seruyce of god [884] and therfore is the brekyng the more greuous of whiche brekynge comen fals eires ofte tyme that wrongfully occupien folkes heritages / And therfore wole [*crist*] put

hem oute of the reigne of heuene that is heritage to good [folke] [885] Of thys brekynge comyth eke ofte tyme that folk vnware [wed]den or synnen with hire owne. kynrede. and namely thilke ha[rlotes] that haunten bordels / of these fool wy*mm*en that mowe b[e lykened] to a comyn gonge. where as men pourgen hire ordure [886] // w[hat se]y wee eke of putours that lyuen by the horrible synne of pute[rie [and] constreyne wy*mm*en to yelden hem a certeyne rente of hire bo[dely] Puterie / ye somtyme his owne wyfe or his childe. as doon [these] bawdes / certes these ben cursed synnes // [887] vndirstonde eke[1] [[2]that Advowtre is sette eke in the .x. co*mm*aun*d*ement*is* betwexe thefte and manslauhter / for hit is lyke gretist thefte that may be / ffor hit is theft of body and of soule / [888] and hit is like an homycide ffor hit kervith a too hem that first wer made oo flesshe And therfore by the olde lawe of god he sholde be sleyne / [889] But nevir the lesse bi the lawe of Ihu Crist that/ is the lawe of pite / whan he seide to the woman that was founden in Advowtre and sholde haue bene sleyne *with* stones after the wiH of the Iewes as was her lawe / go q*uo*d Ihu Crist and haue no more wiH to do synne or wiH no more to do synne / [890] Sothely the vengiau*n*ce of Advowtre is awarded to peynes off helle but yff hit be disturberid bi penitence // [891] yet ben ther mo spices of this cursed synne / as whan the tone of hem is religious or bothe / or of folke that ar enterid in the ordu*r*e of subdekyn or prest/ or hospitulers / and evir the hiher that he is in ordure the grettir is the synne / [892] The thynges that gretly grogen her synne is to breken her avowe of chastite / whan he hath receyved the ordour / [893] and ferthere ovir soth it is / that hooly [3]ordur is cheeff off alle tresoure of god and his speciaH signe and marke of chastite to shewe that they be Ioyned to chastite which that is most precious liffe that is [894] And thes ordred folke bene specially tytelid to god And off the

[1 leaf 272-3 is out]
[2 Addit. MS. 5140, leaf 348]
[3 leaf 348, back]

specyaⁿ meynye of god / ffor whiche whan thei done deedly synne thei bene the speciaⁿ traitours of god and off his poeple / ffor the lyven off the poeple and prayen for the poeple / and whil thei be suche traitours / her prayours availe nat to the poeple / [895] Prestes bene Aungellis as bi the dignyte of mysterie / but sothely seynt poule / Paulus / seith that Sathanas transformyth hym in Aungel of liht / [896] Sothely the prest that hauntith deedly synne he may be lykened to the Aungeⁿ of derkenes *transformed* in the Aungeⁿ of light / he semyth an Aungeⁿ of liht / but forsothe he is an aungeⁿ off derkenes / [897] Suche prestes bene the sonnes of belial as sheweth in the booke of kynges / that theⁱ were the / In libro Regum sones of beliaⁿ. that is the deviⁿ / [898] Beliaⁿ is to seyn *with*outen Iuge and so fare thei thatⁱ thynken thei be fre / and haue no Iuge no more than doth a fre boⁿ that taketh suche a Cowe as hym lyketh in the towne / [899] so fare they by women For riht as a fre boⁿ is Inouh for alle a toune / riht so is a wicked preste corrupcio*un* Inowh for aⁿ a *par*yssh*e* or for alle a contreie / [900] Thes prestes as seith the booke ne co*mm*e not to the mysterie of presthode to the poeple ne to god ne knowe thei not ne the holde hem not apayed as seith the booke of suche flesshe that was to hem offerid / but thei take bi force the flesshe that is rawe / [901] Certes so thes olde shrewes holde hem not apayed of rostid flesshe and sode flesshe / *with* whiche the poeple feden hem on grete reverence but thei wiⁿ haue rawe flessh of folkes wyves and her douhteris [902] And certes thes women that consentyn to her harlotry done gret wronge to Crist and holy Chirche and alle halows / and to alle sowles / ffor thei berevyn hym alle thes that sholde worship crist and hooly chirche and pray for cristen sowles / [903] And therfore haue [1]suche prestes and her lemans eke that consentyn to her lecherye the malison off alle cristen courte tille thei come to Amendement //

[904] The .iij. spice of Advowtre is some tyme betweno a man and his wiff / that is whan thei take no rewarde to her assembelynge but onely to her flesshly delite as seith Seynt Ierome [905] and ne reken of no thyng / but that [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] they ben maried alle is good Inough as thynketh to them / [906] but in suche folke hath the devil power as seith the Aungel Raphael to Tobye / For in her assembelynge that thei put Ihe crist oute of her herte and yeve hem silf to alle ordoure // [907] The .iiij. spice is of the semble of hem that bene of her kynred or of affinite or els *with* them / *with* whiche her faders or her kyndred haue delid in the synne of lecherye / this synne maketh hem like to houndes that take no kepe to kyndred /

/ De parentela [908] And certes parentail is in .ij. maners eyther gostly or flessly / Gostlye as for to delyn *with* her gosseppis / [909] ffor riht so as he that engenderith a childe is his flessly fader / riht so is god fadir his spiritual fader / ffor whiche a woman may in no lesse synne assemblyn *with* hir gossep than *with* hir owne flesshly broder // [910] The .v. spice is thilke abhominable synne of whiche no man vnneth spekith ne writeth / nevir the lesse it is openly reherced in holy writte / [911] this cursidnes doth men & women in dyverse entente or [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] horrible synne / Certes hooly writte may nat be defouled no more than the sonne that shyneth on the donge hille // [912] Another synne appurteyneth to lechery þat cometh in slepyng / and this synne cometh ofte to hem that bene maydens and eeke to them that bene corrupte and this synne men cleepe pollucion that commeth in .iij. maners / [913] some tyme off langwisshyng of body / for the humours bene to rank and habundaunt in the bodie of man / some tyme for infirmyte [1]for the febilnes of the vertu retentiff as phisik maketh mencion / some tyme for sorfett of mete and drynke / [914] And some tyme of

vilons thouhtes that ben enclosed in mannes thouht whan he goth to slepe whiche may nat ben *with*outen synne / ffor whiche men most kepe hem wiselye or ells men mowe synne right greuously &c

Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie.

[915] Nowe *com*meth the remedie ageyns Lecherye that is generally Chastite and continence that restreyneth alle disordeynet moevyng that *com*meth of flesshly talent/ [916] And evir the grettir merite shall he haue that most restreyneth the wicked enchawfyng or ardure of this synne / And this is in .ij. maners that is to seye chastite of mariage and chastite of widdowhode / [917] Nowe shallt thou vndirstonde that matrymonye is leefull assemblynge of man & of woman that receyven bi vertu of the sacrement the bonde / thorugh whiche thei mowe not be departed in alle her liff / that is to seyne while that thei lyven here both [918] as seith the booke is fulle grete sacrement / god made hit in paradise as I haue seide biforne and wolde hym silf be borne in mariage / [919] [. . *no gap in the MS.*] he was at weddyng where as he tornyd watyr in to wyne / whiche was the first miracle that he wrought in erthe bifore his discipules [920] Trewe effecte of mariage clensith fornicacion & replenisshith holy chirches of good ffor hit is the ende of mariage ffor hit chaungith deedly synne in to veniall synne bitwexte hem that bene I-weddid and maketh her hertes alle one that bene I-weddid as well as the bodyes / [921] this is verrey mariage that was enstabilisshid by god or synne biganne / [1]whan natural lawe was in the right poynte in paradise / & hit was ordeyned that one man sholde haue but one womane and one woman sholde haue but one man as seith seynte Austyne / by many reasouns / *Nota quare vna mulier adherebit vni viro & e contra*

[922] ffirst for mariage is first figured bitwex crist and

holy cherche / and the other is for a man is hede of a woman / algate bi ordinaunce hit sholde be so / [923] ffor yff women had mo men than one [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] and that were an horrible thynge bifore god / and eke a woman cowde nat plese to many folke at ones / and also ther sholde nevir be pease nor rest amonge hem ffor everiche wolde axe his owne thynge / [924] And ferther ovir no man sholde knowe his engendure nor who sholde haue his heritage and the woman sholde be the lasse bilevid fro the tyme that she were coniuncte to many men //

Quomodo se haberet vir cum vxore

[925] Nowe commeth̄ howe a man sholde bere hym to his wiffe in .ij. thynges / that is to seye in sufferaunce and reuerence as shewid crist whan he made first woman / [926] for he ne made her not of the hede Adam for she sholde nat cleyme to grete lordship / [927] for ther as the woman hath̄ the maistre she maketh to moche defray ther nedith none / Ensaumples of this the experience day bi day ouh̄t to suffice / [928] Also certes god ne made not woman off the foot of Adam ffor she ne shulde not be holden to lowe for she can nat paciently suffyr / but god made woman of the rybbe of Adam / ffor woman sholde be felaw vnto man / [929] man sholde bere hym vnto his wiff in feith and in trouth̄ and in love as seith Seynt Poule / that man sholde love his wiff as crist lovith̄ hooly cherche / that lovid it so wel that he dyed for hit / so sholde a man for his wiff yf hit were nede //

Quomodo se haberet mulier erga maritum

[930] Nowe han a woman sholde be subiecte / that tellith̄ Seynt Petyr fyrst in obedience [931] as seith̄ the deere / A woman that is a wiff / as longe as she is a wiff she hath̄ none auctorite to swere nor to bere witnes *with*oute leve off hir housbonde that is hir lorde / Algate she sholde be so by reason [932] [1] She sholde eke serve hym in alle

honeste and ben attempre of hir arraye / I wot wel that thei sholde sette her entente to please her housbondes but nat bi her quayntes of Arraye / [933] Seynt Ierome seith that wyfes that bene apparellid in selke in precious purpil ne mowe nat cloth hem in Ihesu Crist Loo what seith Seynt Iohn eeke in this mater [934] Seynt Gregory eeke seith that no wiht seekith precious arraye but onely for vayne glorye / the more to be honoured biforne the poeple [935] hit is a grete folye a woman to haue a fayre array outeward and in her silf foule inwarde // [936] A wiffe sholde eke be mesurable in lookyng and beryng and in langage and discrete in alle hir wordes and in hir dedes / [937] and above alle thynges she sholde love hir housbonde *with* alle hir herte and to hym to be trewe of her bodye / [938] so sholde an housbonde eke to his wiff / For sith that alle the bodye is the housbondes / so sholde hir herte bēn / or ellis bituexte hem too as in that is no *par*fite mariage / [939] Then shul ye vndirstonde that for .iij. thynges a man and his wiff flesshly maye assemble / The first is the entente of engendure of childerne to the service of god / For certes that is the cause fynalle of matrimonye [940] Another cause is to yelden eu*er*yche of hem to other the dette of her bodye / for neyther of hem hath power of his owne body / The .iij^de^. is for to eschewe lechere and vilanye / the iiij. is forsoth deedly synne / [941] As to the first hit is meritory / the secounde also as seith the decre / that she hath meryte of chastite that yeldith to her housbonde the dette of hir bodie / ye thouh hit be ayen her lykyng atte the lust of hir hert // [942] The .iij. manere is venial synne and trewly skarsly may any of thes be *with*oute venial synne for the corrupcion and the delite // [943] The .iiij^th^. maner is for to vndirstond as is thei that assembelith onely for Amorous love / and for none of the [1]foreseide causes / but

for to complysshe thilke brennynge delyte they reke nevir howe /ofte / sothlye it is dedely synne and yet with sorwe some folke wolł peyne hem more to do · then to the appetite sufficith /

[944] The secounde maner off chastite is to be a clene widdowe and eschewe the enbrasynges of[1] a man[1]] [2]and desiren the embrasynge of Ihesu criste. [945] These ben thoo that [h]an ben wyues. & han forgoon hir housbondes. and eke women *that* han doon leccherie & ben releued by penitence / [946] And certes if that a wife koude kepen hire alł chaste by licence of hire housbonde. so that shee nere noon occasion that he agilte: it were to hire a grete merite / [947] These man*er*e women that obseruen chastitee most be clene in herte. as wele as in body. & in thought. & mesurable in clothynge. & in counten*a*unce // Abstinent in etynge and drynkynge in spekyng & in dede / And thanne is she the vesselł. or the boiste of the blessed Mawdelene. that fulfilleth holy chirche fułł of good odour // [948] The .iij.[c] man*er*e of chastite is virginite. and it behoueth that she be holy in hert & clene of body / and than is she spouse to Ihesu criste and she is the lyfe of Aungels / [949] she is the preisyng of this world/. and she is as the3 Martirs in egalite / she hath in hire that tunge may nat telle / [950] virginite bare oure lorde criste / & virgyn was hym //

[951] A nother remedie agay*n*st leccherie is/ specially to withdrawe swiche thyngis as yeuen occasion to thilke vylenye as ease. etyng & drynkynge. For certes whan the potte boilleth strongely. the best remedye is to withdrawe the fuyr [952] Slepynge longe in grete quiete is eke a grete norise to leccherie //

[953] A nother remedye agayns leccherie. is that a man or a woman eschew the compa*n*gny of hem of whiche he douteth to be tempted / For alle be it so. that the dede be withstonde: yet is there grete temptacion.

[1] Addit. MS. 5140 *ends.*]
[2] Christchurch MS., leaf 274.]

[954] Soothly a whyt wal. al thogh it ne brenne nat fully by stynkyng of a Candle: yet is the walle blakke of the light [955] full ofte tyme I rede that no man triste in his owne perfeccion. but he be strenger than Sampson. or holier than Dauid/ or wiser than Salomon //

[956] Now after that I haue declared yow as I kan. the seuen deedly synnes. & som of hire braunchis & hire remedies soothly if I coude. I wolde telle yow the x commaundementes [957] But so hye a doctrine I lete to dyuynes / natheles I hope to god they ben touched in this tretys. euerych of hem alle

De confessione

[958]
NOw for as moche as for the secounde partye of penitence stant in confession of mouth. as I began in the second chapitre I sey seint Augustyn seith / [959] synne is euery word/ & euery dede / And alle that men coueiten agayn the law of Ihesu criste / & this is for to synne in herte / in mowth / & in dede / by thi v. wittys / that ben sight. huryng. smellynge tastynge, or sauorynge and felynge // [960] Now is it good to vndirstonde the circumstaunces that aggreggen muchel euery synne//[961] Thow shalte considere. what thow art that doist synne. whether thow be male or female. yonge or/ olde gentell/ or thralle. free / or seruaunt. hole / or syke / wedded/ or sengle / ordred or vnordred. wis or fool. clerke / or seculer / [962] if she be of thy [1]kynrede bodely or gostely / or noon / if any of thy kynrede haue synne[d] with hire or noon //

[963] Another circumstaunce is this / whether it be [done] in fornicacioun. or in avoutrie. or Incest or noon / Mayden or noon. in manere of homycyde or noon. orrible grete synnes. or smale. and how longe thow haste contynued in synne // [964] The thridde circumstaunce / is the place / where thow haste doon synne / whether in other

mennes hous / or in thyn owne. in felde or in chirche. or in chirche hawe / in chirche dedicat or noon / [965] For if the chirche be halewed. and man or woman spilde his kynde inwith that place by wey of synn[e] or by wikked temptacion: the chirche is entredited. til it be reconsiled by the bysshope / [966] and the preest sholde be entredited that dide swiche a vilenye to terme of alle his lyfe he sholde nomore synge masse / & if he dide: he sholde doon deedly synne. at euery tyme that he songe masse // [967] The ferthe circumstaunce is be whiche mediatours. as by messageris. or for enticement. or for consentement to bere compaignye [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] wole goo the deuel of helle [968] for they that egge[n] or consenten to the synne: ben prisoners to the synne. & of the damnacion of the synnere //

[969] The fyfthe is how many tymes that he ha[th] synned if it be in his mynde. & how ofte that he hath falle. [970] For he that ofte falleȝ in synne: he despised the mercy of god. & encresseth his synne & is vnkynde to criste / & he wexeth the more febl[e] to withstonde synne. & synneth the more lightly. [971] & the latter aryseth. & is the more eschewe for to schryue hym. and namely to hym that hath ben his confessour / [972] For whiche that folke whan that they fallen agayn in hire olde folyes. other they leten hire olde confessours al outrely. or they departen hire shryfte in dyuers places / but soothly swiche departed shrifte deserueth no mercy of god of his synnes // [973] The sixte circumstaunce is. why that a man synneth. a[s] by whiche temptacion. & if hym selfe procure thilke temptacioun or by the excitynge of other folke / or if he synne with a woman [b]y force / or by hire owne assente. [974] or if the woman maugre hire hed[e] hath be aforced or noon this shalle she telle / for couetise / or for pouerte / & if it was hire procurynge or noon / & swiche maner

harneys // [975] The seuenthe circumstaunce is in what maner he h[ath] doon his synne / & how that she hath suffred that folke han [doon] to hire / [976] The same shalle the man tellen pleynly with alle[cir]cumstaunces. & whether he hath synned with comoun borde[l] women or noon / [977] or doon his synne in holy tymes or noon / or by forn his shrifte / or after his lattere shryfte / [978] & hath parauenture broken therfore his penaunce enyoyned / by whoos helpe & whoos counseile. bi sorcerie or crafte al moste be tolde / [979] Alle these thynges after that they ben grete or smale. engreggen the conscience of man. & eke the preest. that is thy Iuge may the better ben auysed of hise Iugement. in yeuynge of thy penaunce. and [1][t]hat is after thy contricioun / [980] For vnderstonde wele that after tyme that a man hath defouled his bapteme by synne. if he wole come to sauacioun. ther is noon other wey. but be penitence and shrifte & be satisfaccioun / [981] & namely by the twoo //. If ther be a confessour to whiche he may shryue hym / And the Thridde if he haue lyfe to performe it /

[982] Thanne shalle men loke & considere if he wole make a trewe & profitable confessioun: ther moste ben iiij. condicioun*s* // [983] Firste it mote ben in sorwefull bitternesse of herte / As seide te kynge Ezechiel to god / I wole remembre me alle the yeres of my lyfe in bitternesse of myn herte / [984] This condicion of bitternesse hath .v. signes // The firste is that confession moste be shamefaste nat for to kouere ne hide his synne / but for he hath agilte his god & defouled his soule / [985] And here of seith seint Augustyn / The herte trauailleth for shame of his synne / And for he hath grete shame-fastnesse / he is digne to haue grete mercy of god / [986] Swiche was ye confessioun of the publican. that wolde nat heue vp his eyen to heuen. For he hadde offended god of heuen / For whiche shamefastnesse: he had a noon the mercy of god / [987] And therfore seyth

seint Augustyn that swiche shamefaste folke ben nexte foryefnesse & remission // [988] Another signe is humylite of Confession / Of which seith seint Petir: humbleth yow vnder the myght of god / the hond of god is myghty in confession: For therby god foryeueth the synnes For he allone hath the power / [989] And this humylyte shall ben in hert & in signe outwarde / For right as he hath humylyte to god in hert: right so sholde he humble his body outwarde to the preest thatte sitte in goddis place / [990] For whiche in no manér sith that criste ys souereyn & the preest mene & mediatour bitwixe criste & the synnere / & the synner is the laste by wey of reson / [991] thanne sholde nat the synner sitte as hye as his confessours. but knele byforn hym. or at his feet. but if maladye distorbed it / For he shalle nat take kepe who sitte there. but in whoos place that he sitteth // [992] A man that hath trespased to a lorde / & cometh for to axe mercy & maken his acorde & sette hym doun by the lorde: men wolde holden hym outrageous & nat worthy so sone for to haue remission ne mercy [993] The thridde signe is. that thy shrifte sholde be full of teeris. if men may. & if he may nat wepe with his bodely eyen: late hym wepe in his herte / [994] swiche was the confession of seint Petir / For after that he hadde forsake ihesu criste: he wente oute & weepe bitterly [995] The fertho signe is / that he ne lette nat for his shame to shewe his confession / [996] Swiche was the confession of the Mawdeleyne that ne spared for no shame of hem that weren atte feste for to goo to oure lorde ihesu criste & byknowe to hym hir synne // [997] The fifte signe is that a man or woman be obeissaunt to receyue the penaunz that hym is enyoyned / For certes Ihesu criste for the giltes of o man [1]was obedient to his deeth /

[998] The seconde condicion of verrey confession is that it be hastely don / For certes if a man hadde a dedly wounde. euer the lenger that he tarieth to warisse

hym selfe the more wolde it corrupte & haste hym to his deeth / and eke ye wounde woude be the werse for to hele / [999] And right so farith synne. that longe tyme is in a man vnshewid / [1000] Certe a man ough[t] hastely shewyn his synnes For many causes. as for drede of deth that ofte sodeynly. And in no certeyne, what tyme it shal be ne in what place / & eke the drecchyng of o synne draweth in a no*th*[*er*] [1001] And eke the lenger he tarieth: the forther he is fro criste. And if he abide vnto his laste day: scarsly may he shryue hym or remembre hym of his synnes. or repente for the greuous malad[ye] of his deeth. [1002] And for as myche as he hath nat in his lyfe herkened Ih*es*u criste [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] at his laste day & scarsly wole he herkene hym [1003] And vndirstonde that this condic*i*on moste haue .iiij. thynges // // Thy shrifte moste be purueyd by-forn and auysed / For wikked haste dooth noo p*r*ofite. And that a man konne shryue hym of his synnes. be it of pride or enuye. & so forth. with the spices & circumstaunces / [1004] and that he haue comp*r*ehended in his mynde the nombre & the grettenes of his synnes and how longe that he hath leyn in synne [1005] & eke that he be contryte of hise synnes and in stedefaste purpos by the grace of god neu*er* eft to falle in synne // And eke that he drede. & countrewaite hym selfe & that he flee the occasions of synne to whiche hé is enclyned // [1006] Also that thow shalte shryue the of alle thy synnes to oo man // And nat a p*ar*ce[l] to oo man. & nat a p*ar*cel to a nother. that is to vndirstonde in ente*n*t to dep*ar*te thy confessioun as for shame or drede / For it nys butte stranglynge of thy soule / [1007] For certis Ih*es*u criste is intierly al good & in hym is noon inp*er*feccion / And therfore outher he foryeueth alle p*ar*fitly. or elles neu*er* a dele. [1008] I sey nat that if thow be assigned to the penit*a*uncer for certeyn synne / that thow arte bounde too shewe hym alle the remen*a*unt of thy synnes of whiche

thow haste be shreuen of thy curate / but if it lyke the of thyn humylite this is noo departynge of thy shrifte. [1009] Ne I ne sey nat *ther* as I speke of dyuiysioun of confession. that if thow haue licence for to shryue the to a discreet & an honest preest where thee lyketh / & eke by the licence of thy curat that thow ne maiste wele shryue the to hym of alle thy synnes / [1010] but late noo blot byhynde / ne late noo synne vntoolde. Asfer as thow hastee remembraunce / [1011] And whan thow shalte be shryue to thy curat'. telle hym alle thy synne that thow haste doon / sith thowe were laste y-shryuen / Al this is no wikked intente of dyuysion of shrifte //

[1012] Also the verrey shrifte axeth certeyne condicions [1][F]yrste that thow shryue the by thy free wille nat constrayned. ne for shame of folke. ne for maladie or swiche thynges / For it is reson that he that trespaseth by his free wille: he mote be his free wille confesse his trespace / [1013] Noon other man shalle tellen his synne but he hym selfe / Ne he shal nat naite or denye his synne. ne wrath hym agayn the preest for hise amonestynge to lete synne // [1014] The secound condicion is / that thy shryfte be laweful. that is to seyn that thow that shryuest the & eke the preste that hureth thy confession be verrely in the feith of holy chirche [1015] And that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercye of Ihesu criste as kaym or Iudas / [1016] And eke a man mote accuse hym selfe of his owne trespace / & nat' a nother / but he shalle blame .and. wite hym selfe & his owne malice of his synne & nooñ other / [1017] But natheles but if a nother man be occasion or enticere of his synne or that the estate of a *per*sone be swiche. thurgh whiche his synne is agreggyd/ or ellys that he may nat pleynly shryue hym hym but he telle the *per*sone with whiche he hath synned: than may he telle it. [1018] so that his entente be nat to bakbite the .*per*sone. but oonly to declaren his confession /

[1019] Thow ne shalte natte eke make no lesynges in thy confessioun for humylite / *par*auenture to seyn that thow haste doon synnes. of whiche thow were neuer gilti // [1020] For seint Augustyn seith. yf thow be cause of humylite makest lesynges on thy selfe thogh that thow ne were nat in synne byforn: yet arte thow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges // [1021] Thow moste eke shewe thy synnes by thyn owne *pro*pre Mouth / but if thow be woxen dombe. & nat be no lettre // for thow haste doon the synne: thow shalte haue the shame // [1022] [T]how shalte nat eke peynte thy confession by faire subtile wordes [to] kouere the moore thy synne / For thanne bygyleste thow thy selfe [a]nd nat the preest / Thow most telle it platly. be it neu*er* so foule ne so horrible // [1023] Thow shalte eke shryue the to a preest / that is discrete to counseile the // And eke thow shalt nat shryue thee for veyn glorie. ne for ypocrisie. ne for no cause. but only for the doute of Ih*es*u criste & the hele of thy soule // [1024] Thow shalt nat eke renne to the preest sodeynly to telle hym lyghtly thy synne. as who so telleth a Iape / or a tale / but auysely & with grete deuocion / [1025] and gen*er*ally shryue the ofte. if thow ofte falle: ofte thow aryse be co*n*fession / [1026] And though thow shryue the ofter thanne ones of synne of whiche thow haste be shryuen. it is the more meryte / And as seith seint Augustyn. thow shalt haue the more lightly relesyng & grace of god bothe of synne & of peyne / [1027] And certes oones in a yere atte leste weye it is lawefull / for to ben housled / for soothly onys a yere. alle thynges renouellen.

[1028] Now haue I tolde of verrey co*n*[fes]sion that is the seconde p*ar*tie of penitence

[1]De tercia parte penitencie

[1029] The thridde partie of penitence is Satisffaccion. And that stant generally in almesse. & bodely peyne // [1030] Now ben there .iij. maner of Almesses. Contricion of herte. where a man offreth hym selfe to god /. Another is to haue pite of his neighebores / The thridd[e] is in yeuynge good counseile & comfort goostly & bodyly where men han nede. and namely in sustenaunce of mannes foode // [1031] And take kep[e] a man hath nede of these thynges, generally he hath nede of fode // h[e] hath nede of clothynge & herberwe / he hath nede of charitable conseile & visytynge in prison. & Maladie. & sepulture of his dede body / [1032] And if thow maist nat visite the needfull with thy persone visite hym by thy message and thy yeftes / [1033] These ben general almesses or werkys of charite of hem that han temporel rechesse or discrecion in conseillynge / Of these werkes shaltow heren at the day of dome //

[1034] These Almesses shaltow doon of thynne owne propre thynges & hastyfly and priuely if thow maiste / [1035] But natheles if thou maist nat do pryuely: thow shalt nat forbere to doon thyn almesse. though men se it. so that it be nat doon for thanke of ye worlde but oonly for thanke of Ihesu criste. [1036] For as witnesseth sci[nt] Mathew .5to. A cite may nat ben hydde that is sette on a Mountayne ne men lyght nat a lanterne. & putte it vnder a busshel. but men. se[t] it on a Candelstyke to lyghten the men in the hous // [1037] Ryght soo shal youre lyght lighten byforn men. that they may sen youre good werkys & glorifien youre fader that is in heuene //

[1038] Now as to speke of bodyly peyne it stante in praieris in wakynges in fastynges & in ·v[er]tuouse

techynges of orisons // [1039] ye shulle vndirstonde that orison[s] or preiers is for to seyn. a pitous wille of herte that redresse [*MS. torn*] god & expressith it by worde outwarde to remoeue harmes. & t[o] han thynges espirituel & durable. and somtyme temporel thynges / [of] whiche orisons. certes in the orison of the Pater noster. hath Ihesu criste enclosed moost thynges // [1040] Certes it is priuelegged of .iij. thynges in his dignite / for whiche it is more digne / thanne any other praier for Ihesu criste hym selfe maked it / [1041] And it is short For it sholde be koude the more lightly / And forto witholde it the more esely in herte / & helpen hym selfe the oftere with the orison / [1042] & for a man sholde be the lasse wery to sey it / And for a man may nat excuse hym to lerne it. it is so shorte. & so esy / And for it comprehendeth in it sel[f] alle gode preiers / [1043] The exposicion of this holy praiere / that is so excellent & digne I be-take to the maistris of theologie. saues thus moch wole I seyn. that whan thow praiest that god sholde foryeue th[e] thy giltes. as thow foryeuest hem that agilten to the: be fulle wele ware. that thow ne be nat oute of charite / [1044] This holy oriso[n][1] [2]amenysshith eke veniall synnes and therfore hit apperteyneth specially to penitence /

[1] Christchurch MS. *has lost* 10 *leaves.*]
[2] Addit. MS. 5140, fol. 355, back]

[1045] this prayer most be trewly seide and in verrey feyth / and that men prayen to god ordinatly and discretely and devoutly And alle wey a man shalle put his wille to be subiecte to þe wille of god / [1046] this orisone moste eeke be seide *with* gret humblenes and fulle pure / honestly and not to the anoyaunce of any man or woman hit moste eeke be contynued *with* the workes of charite / [1047] hit avayleth eeke ageyne the vices of the soule / For as seyth Seynt Ierome / bi fastynge bene savid the vices of the flesshe / and by prayer the vices of the soule //

[1048] Aftyr this thou shalt vnderstonde that bodely peyne stondith in wakynge for Ihesu Crist seith / waketh and prayeth þat ye ne enter in wicked

temptacioun / [1049] ye shal vndirstonde that fastyng stondith also in iij thynges/in forberyng of bodely metes & drynkes and in forberyng of worldelye iolite / and in forberinge of dedely synne [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] with his mygh /

[1050] And thou shalt vndirstonde that god ordeyned fastyng / and to fastynge appurteyneth .iiij. thynges / [1051] largenes to pore folke / gladnes of herte / spiritual not to Anggrie / ne anoyed ne gruche for he fastith / and alle for semblable houre for to ete by mesure / that is for to seye A man sholde nat ete in vntyme ne sitte no lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth //

[1052] Then thou shalt vnderstond that bodely peyne stonte in disciplyne or techyng bi worde or bi wrytyng or bi ensaumple / Also in werynge of heyres or of stamyn or of habergions on her naked flessh for cristes sake And suche maner of penaunces / [1053] but ware the wel that suche maner of penaunces on thy flessh ne make not thyn herte bittyr or [1] Angre or noyed of thy silf / for bettir is to cast awaye thyn heire than for to cast the swetnes of ihesu crist [1054] And therfore seith Seynt Poule / cloth you as they that bene chosyn of god in herte of misericorde debonarite sufferaunce / and suche maner of clothyng of whiche Ihesus Crist is most apayed than of his here or of his habourgioun or hawberkes //

[1055] then is disciplyne eke in knockyng of thy brest in scourginge with yerdes / in knelynges / in tribulaciouns / [1056] in suffering paciently wronges that bene done to hym/and eke in pacient sufferaunce of maladye/ or lesynge of worldely Cateh / or of wiff or childrēn / or other freendes /

[1057] Then shalt thou vndirstonde whiche thynges distourbyn penaunce / and this is in .iiij. maners that is drede shame hope and wanhope that is disperacioun / [1058] & for to speke first of drede for whiche he

wenitħ that he may suffre no pen*aun*ce / [1059] There ageyns is remedie / for to thynke þ*at* bodye pen*aun*ce is but shorte and litel at regarde of þ° peyne of helle / that is cruell and so longe that it lastitħ w*ith*oute eende /

[1060] Nowe ageyns the shame that a man hatħ to shryve hym and namely thes ypocrytes that wolde beholde so p*ar*fite that they haue no nede to shryve hem / [1061] ageyns that shame sholde a man thynke that by waye of reasoun' that he that hatħ nat bene shamed to do foule thynges Certes hym ouħt nat to be ashamed to do fayre thynges / and that is confessions // [1062] A man sholde eeke thynk that god seetħ and wot alle thy thouhtes and alle thy workes / Fro hym may no thynge be hide ne coverid / [1063] Men sholde eke remembre hem of the shame that is to come atte the daye of dome to hem that be nat penitent and shryven in this present lyff / [1064] For all the creaturs in ertħe and in helle shull seene appertely alle that he hydetħ in this worlde /

[1065] Now for to speke of the hope of hem þ*at* bene negligent and slowe to shryve hem / hit stont in .ij. maners / [1066] the tone is þ*at* he hopitħ for to lyve longe / and for to porchace [1]moche riches for his delyte / and then he wolde shryve hym & as he seitħ he may as hym semytħ than tyme Inouħ for to come to shrifte / [1067] Another is surquedre that he hatħ in cristis mercye [1068] Ageyne the fyrst vice / he shall thynke that our lyff is in no sekyrnes / and eke that alle the riches in this worlde ben in aventure and passen as a shaddowe in the walle [1069] as seitħ Seynte Gregorie that hit perteynitħ to the grete riħtwousnes of god / that nevir shall the peyne stynte of hem that nevir wolde withdrawe hem from synne and rancour but aye contynue in synne / For thilke perpetual wille to done synne they shull haue perpetuall peyne //

[1070] Wanhope is in .ij. maners / the fyrst wanhope is in the mercie of Crist / that othir is that they

thynke that they ne myght not longe preserve in goodnes / [1071] The fyrst wanhope commeth of that he demyth that he hath synned so gretely / and so ofte / and so longe lyen in synne þat he shall not be savid / [1072] Certes ageyns this cursid wanhope sholde he thynke that the passioun of our lorde Ihesu Crist is more stronge for to vnbynde than synne is stronge / [*no gap in MS.*] [1073] Ageyns þe secounde wanhope he shall thynke that as ofte as he fallith he may arrise ageyne by penitence / and thouh he nevir so longe haue leyne in synne / the mercie of god is allwey redye to receyve hym to mercie / [1074] Ageyns that wanhope that he demeth that he sholde not longe persevere in goodnes / he shall thynke the febylnes of the devil may no thynge done but men will suffyr hym [1075] & eke he shall haue strength of the help of god and of alle holy chirche and of the proteccioun of alle aungells yff hym lyst //

[1076] Then shall men vndirstonde what is the reward of penaunce and aftir the worde off Ihesu Criste hit is the endeles blysse of hevyne [1077] ther ioye hath no contrarie of no wo ne grevance / there alle harmes bene passid of this present lyff / there as is sykernes fromo the peyne off helle / there as the blissidfull companye that reioysen evirmore euerych of others ioye / [1078] there as the bodye of a man that whilom was foule and dyrke is more clerer than the sonne / there as the bodye was whilom seke frel febyll and mortall / is immortall and so stronge and so hole that there may no thyng apayre hit / [1079] ther as is neithyr hungyr nor thurst ne colde / but euery soule replenysshid with the sight of the parfite knowynge of god / [1080] This blessid regne mowe men purchace by poverte espirituall and the glorie bi lowlynes / The plente of ioye by hungyr and thurst / and the reste by travell / and the lyff by dethe and mortificacioun off synne Amen. /

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